



64 PAGE SPECTACULAR

INFERNO
CONTINUES

AVENGERS

PRESENTING THE NEW TEAM!

\$1.75 US
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300
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APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

MISTER
FANTASTIC

THE MIGHTY
THOR

INVISIBLE
WOMAN

STEVE ROGERS,
THE CAPTAIN

AND,
REINTRODUCING...
GIL GAMESH
THE FORGOTTEN
ONE!

BUSCEMA - PALMER

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE MIGHTY AVENGERS!**

INFERNO²

REALITY IS A SERIES OF
COINCIDENCES STRUNG
TOGETHER BY ACCIDENT.
OR TO PUT IT ANOTHER
WAY...

...REALITY IS AN
ACCIDENT WAITING
TO HAPPEN.

AAEEEEEE!

THERE'S ONE
HAPPENING NOW.

WALTER
SIMONSON
WRITING

JOHN
BUSCEMA
LAYOUTING

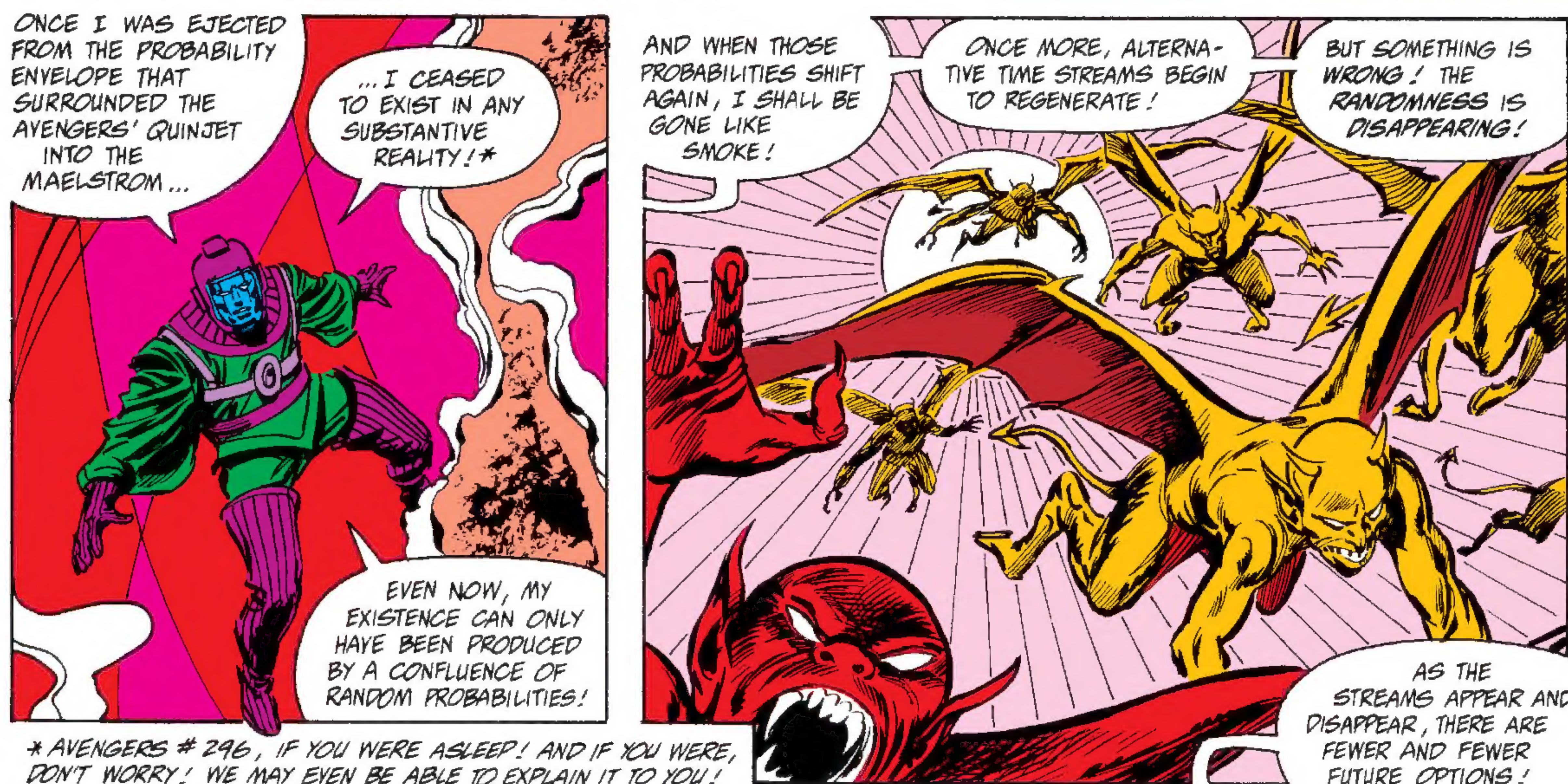
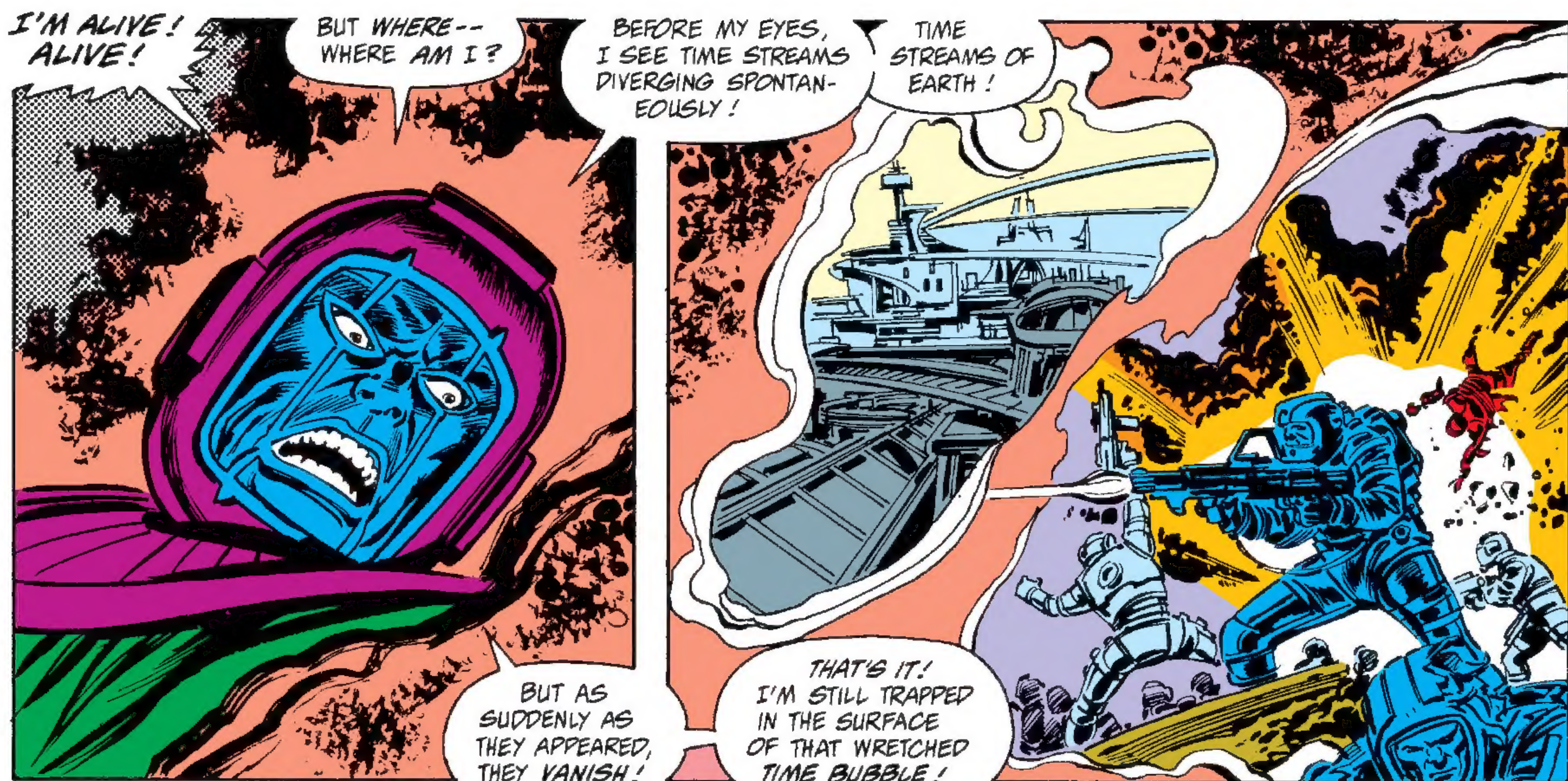
TOM
PALMER
FINISHING

BILL
OAKLEY
LETTERING

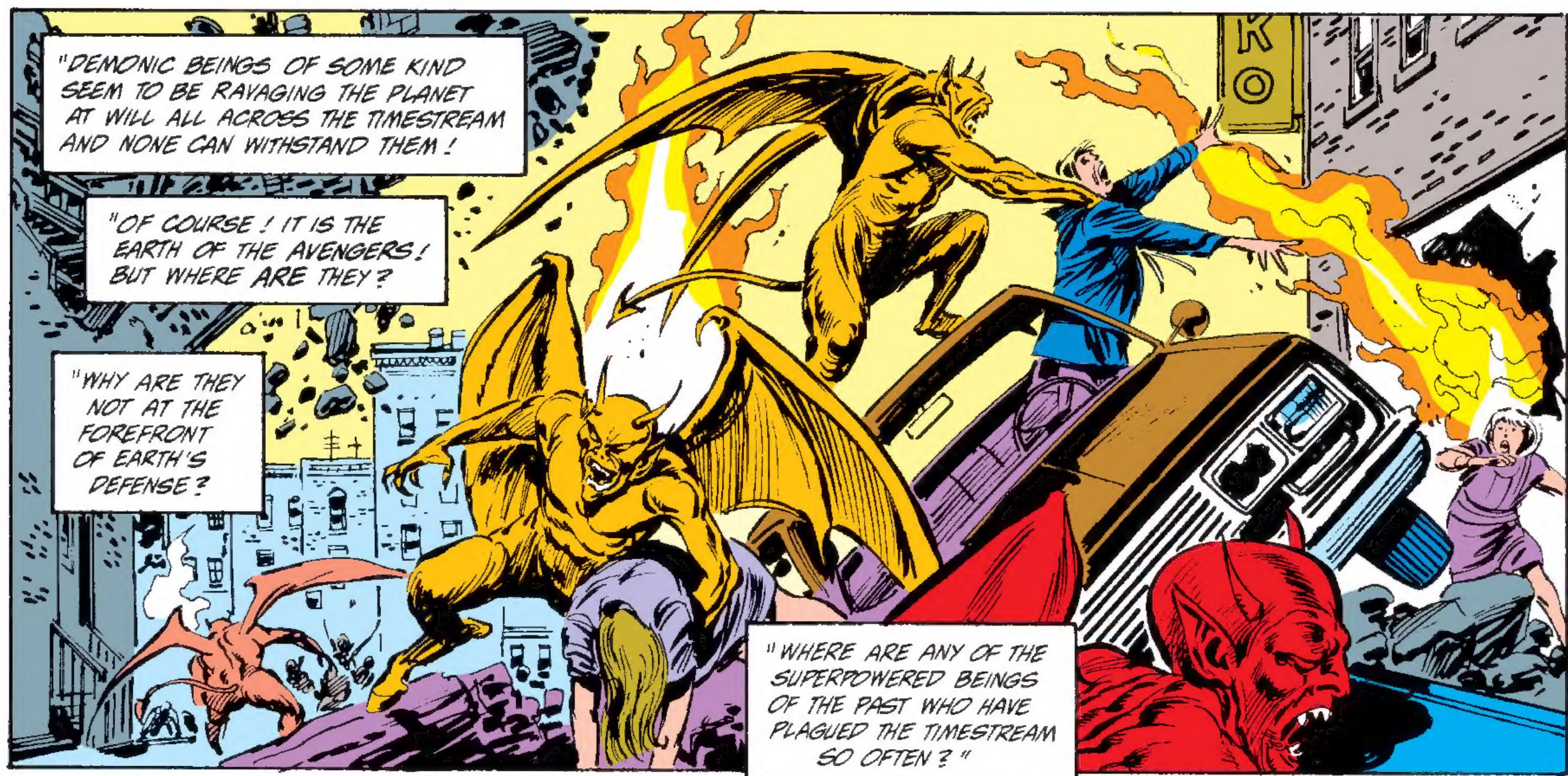
BECTON
& SIRY
COLORING

MARK
GRUENWALD
EDITING

TOM
DEFALCO
EDITING IN CHIEF



* AVENGERS # 296, IF YOU WERE ASLEEP! AND IF YOU WERE, DON'T WORRY! WE MAY EVEN BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN IT TO YOU!



THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE ANSWER. SUCH BEINGS MUST ALREADY BE DEAD!

NOT ONLY HAVE THE DEMONS DESTROYED THEM BUT LIKE A VIRUS INFECTING THE TIME STREAM, THEY ARE STEADILY DESTROYING ALTERNATIVE FUTURES OF EARTH AS WELL!

BUT THIS CANNOT BE! I ALREADY KNOW THAT AT SOME POINT IN EARTH'S FUTURE, THE AVENGERS ARE DESTINED TO ENTER THE TIME BUBBLE!*

AND MY SOLE CHANCE OF ESCAPING THIS NON-EXISTENCE IS TO ENTER THEIR PROBABILITY ENVELOPE AS THEY PASS!

THEY WILL BE THE ONLY GENUINE REALITY IN THIS SHIFTING MIASMA OF ILLUSION!

*KANG WAS PAYING ATTENTION A FEW ISSUES BACK!

YET IF THIS DEMONIC POSSESSION OF THE TIME STREAM GOES UNCHALLENGED, THERE WILL OBVIOUSLY BE NO AVENGERS!

SO IN THE MOST BITTER OF IRONIES, I MUST HELP MY DEADLIEST ENEMIES TO SAVE MYSELF!

AND FOR THAT, I MUST ACTIVATE MY HARNES AND SEEK THE SOURCE OF THIS DEMONIC INVASION!

I HAVE ARRIVED TOO LATE! THE INVASION HAS ALREADY BEGUN!

I DARE NOT RISK ANOTHER TIME JUMP!

EVERY MOVE I MAKE PUTS MORE AND MORE STRESS ON MY ALREADY TENUOUS EXISTENCE!

SPRANNING

HOW IRONIC THAT KANG, THE MASTER OF TIME, SHOULD HAVE SO LITTLE OF IT LEFT!

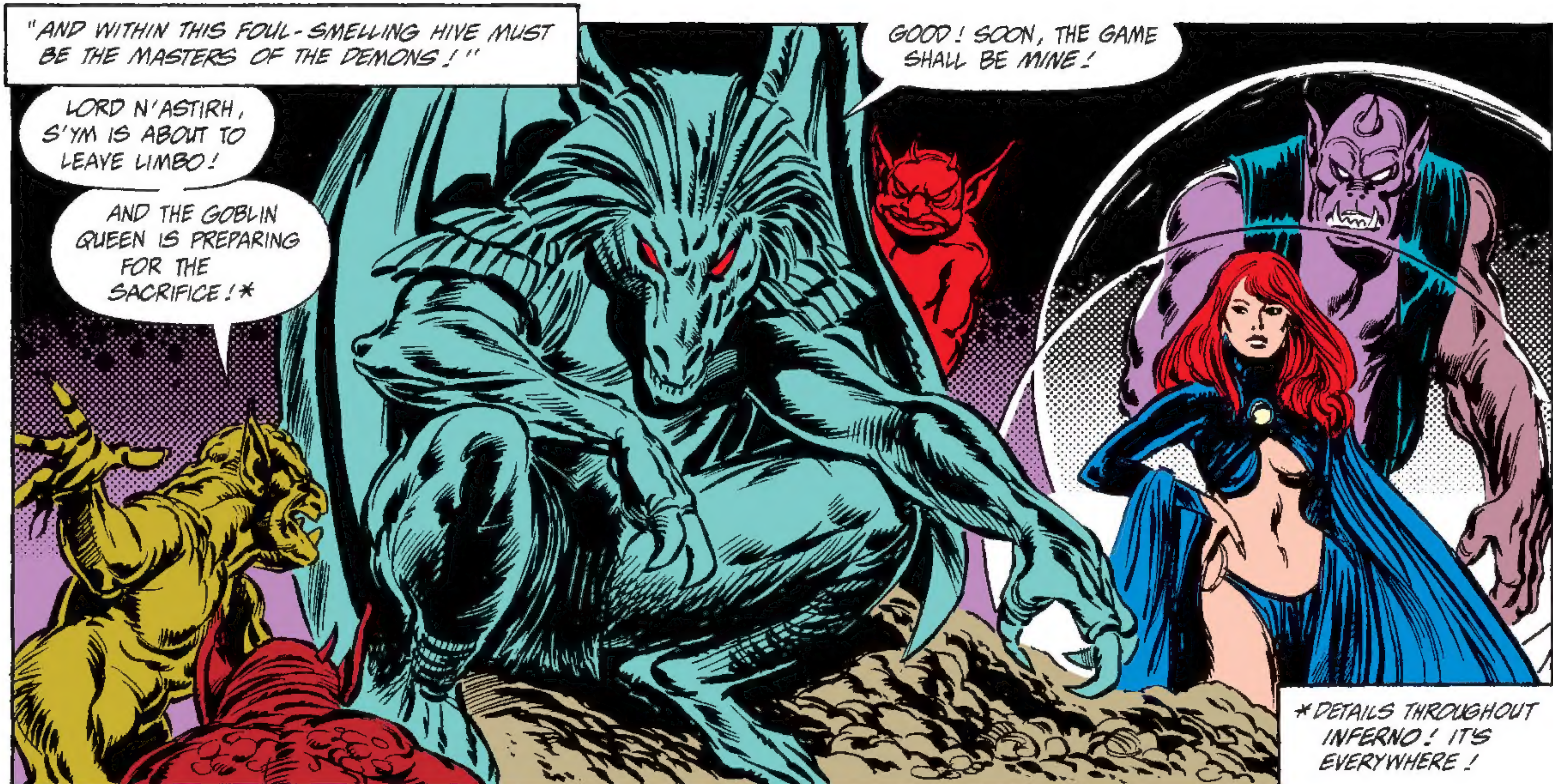
I MUST MOVE LIKE THE WIND, SEE WHAT I CAN SEE, AND PRAY THAT THE AVENGERS ARE NOT ALREADY DESTROYED!

FULL POWER TO ALL SCANNERS! I MUST LEARN WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE!

EVEN THE BUILDINGS ARE INFECTED WITH THE DEMONIC PLAGUE!

AND FURTHER SOUTH, A GREAT GROWTH ATOP THE MATCHING TOWERS WITH DEMONS SWARMING INTO IT LIKE INSECTS!

THIS CITY IS THE SOURCE OF THE DISEASE!



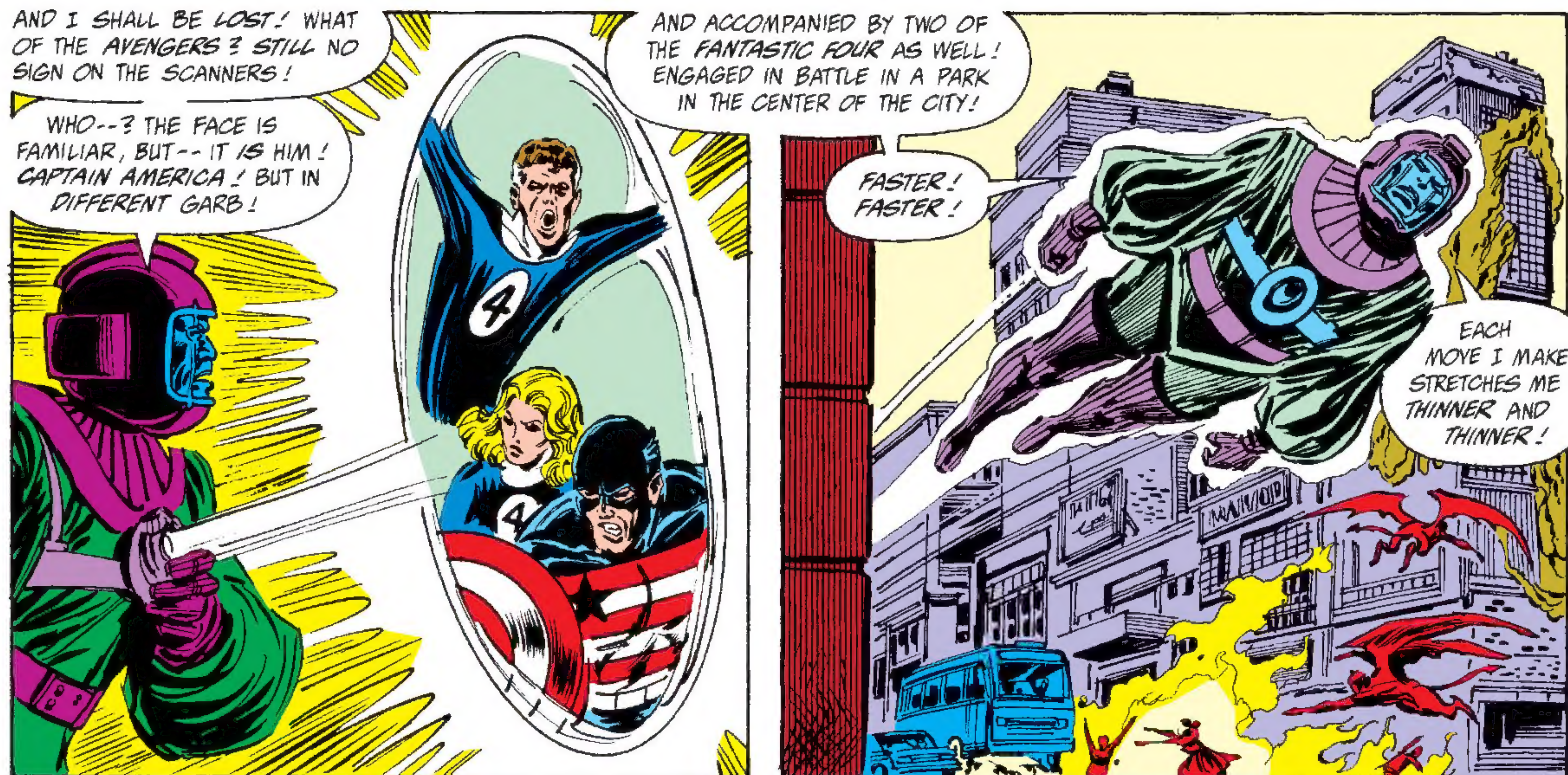
"AND WITHIN THIS FOUL-SMELLING HIVE MUST BE THE MASTERS OF THE DEMONS!"

GOOD! SOON, THE GAME SHALL BE MINE!

LORD N'ASTIRH, S'YM IS ABOUT TO LEAVE LIMBO!

AND THE GOBLIN QUEEN IS PREPARING FOR THE SACRIFICE!*

*DETAILS THROUGHOUT INFERNO! IT'S EVERYWHERE!



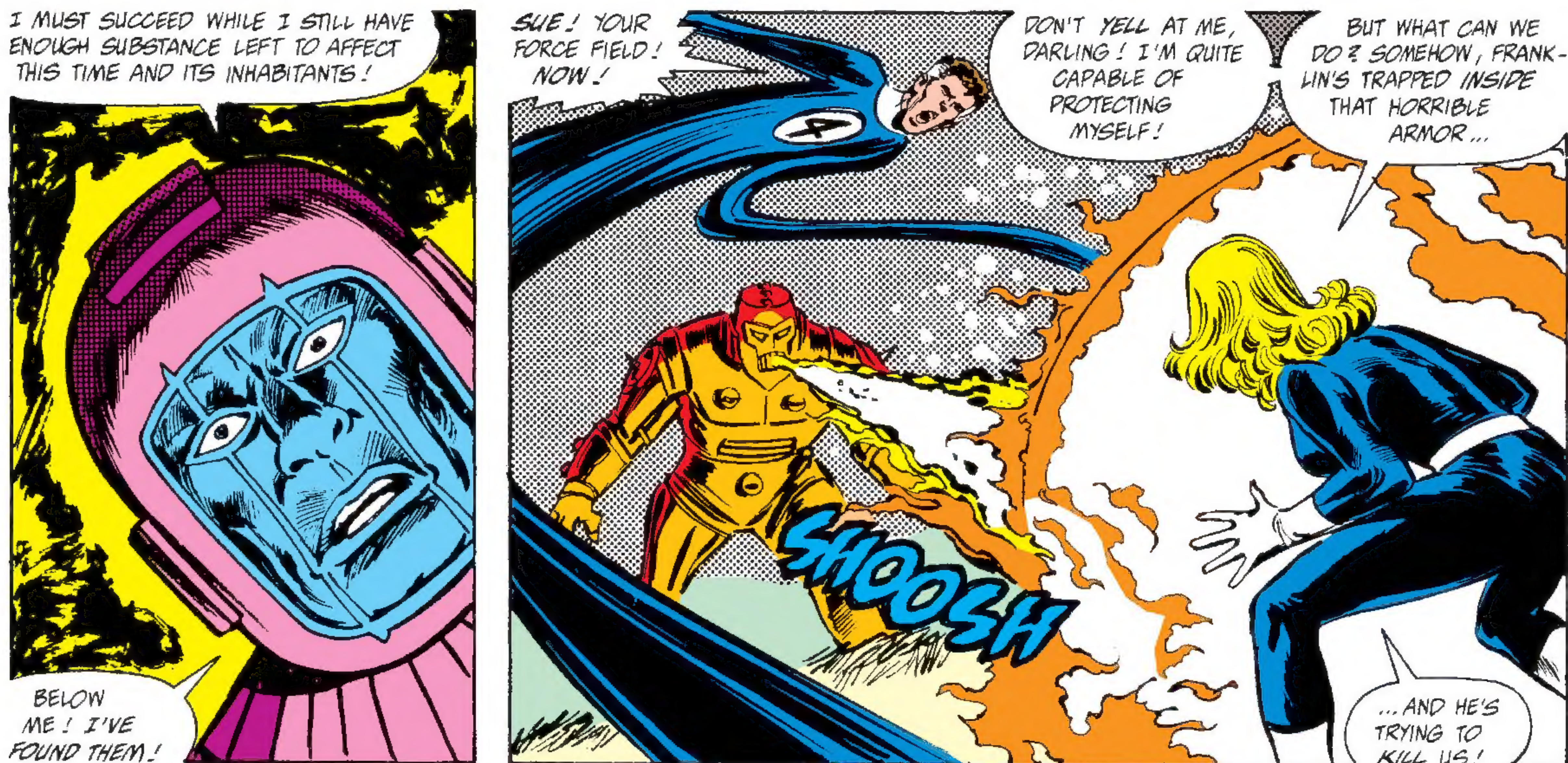
AND I SHALL BE LOST! WHAT OF THE AVENGERS? STILL NO SIGN ON THE SCANNERS!

WHO--? THE FACE IS FAMILIAR, BUT-- IT IS HIM! CAPTAIN AMERICA! BUT IN DIFFERENT GARB!

AND ACCOMPANIED BY TWO OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR AS WELL! ENGAGED IN BATTLE IN A PARK IN THE CENTER OF THE CITY!

FASTER! FASTER!

EACH MOVE I MAKE STRETCHES ME THINNER AND THINNER!



I MUST SUCCEED WHILE I STILL HAVE ENOUGH SUBSTANCE LEFT TO AFFECT THIS TIME AND ITS INHABITANTS!

SUE! YOUR FORCE FIELD! NOW!

DON'T YELL AT ME, DARLING! I'M QUITE CAPABLE OF PROTECTING MYSELF!

BUT WHAT CAN WE DO? SOMEHOW, FRANKLIN'S TRAPPED INSIDE THAT HORRIBLE ARMOR...

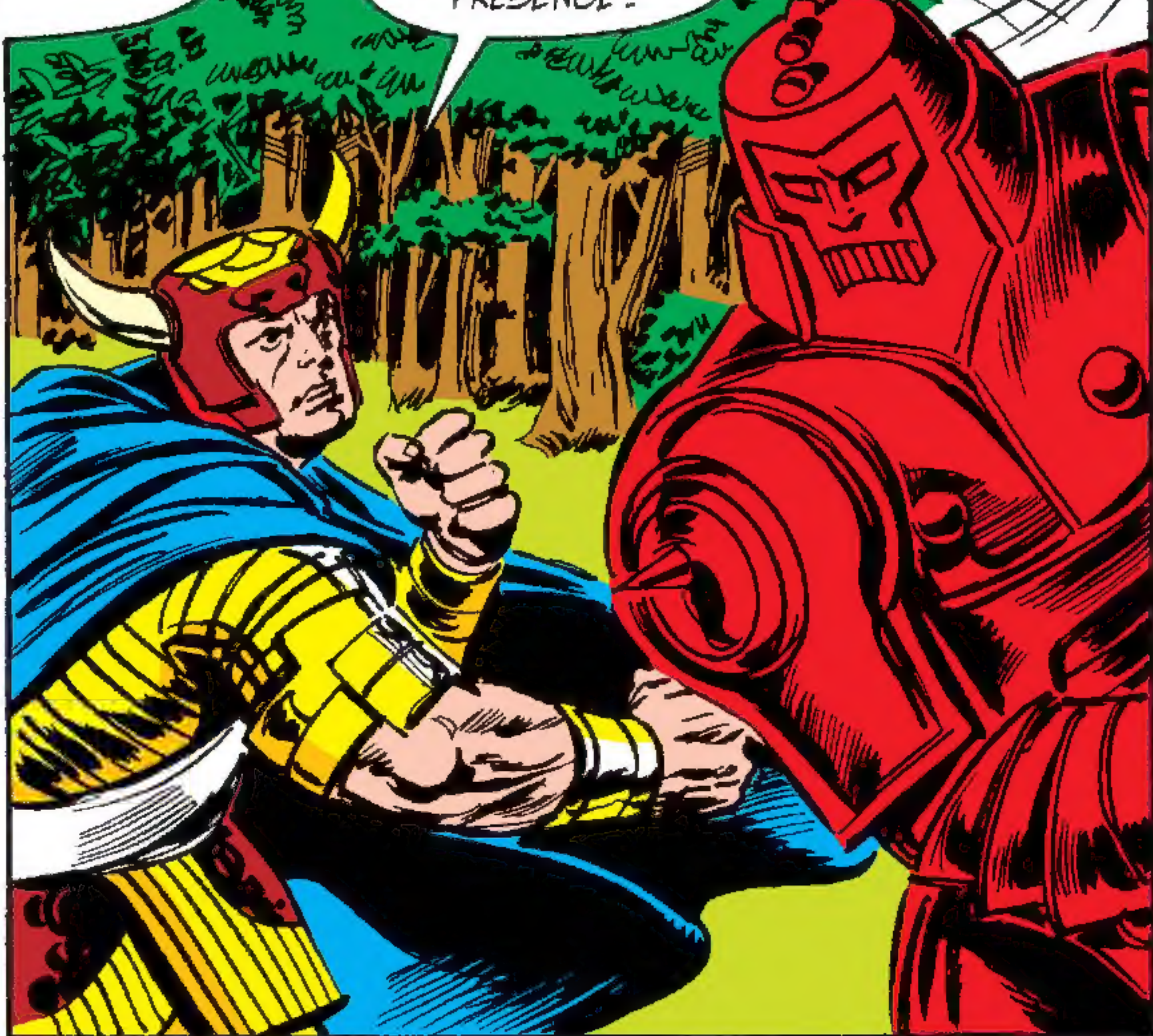
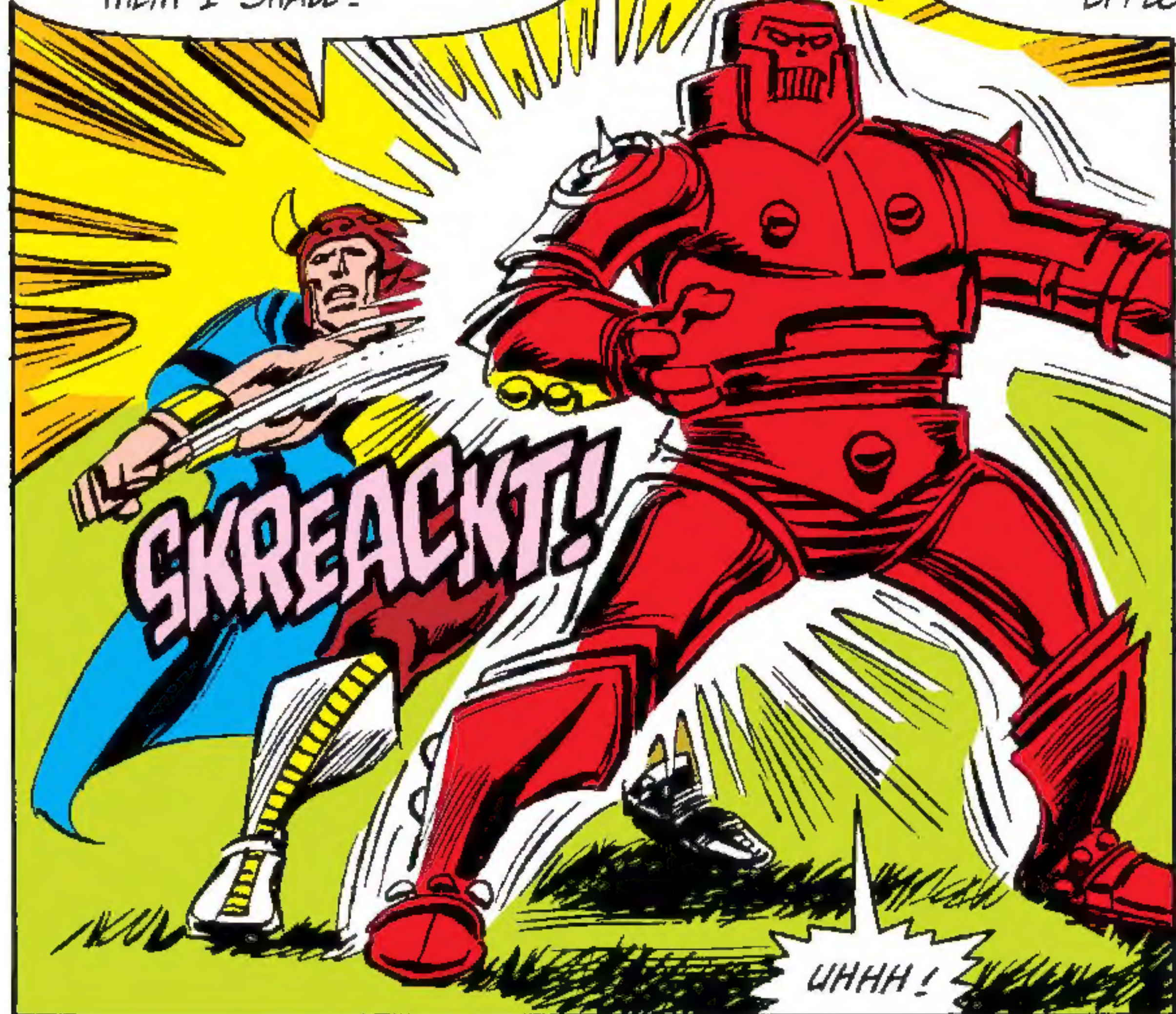
BELOW ME! I'VE FOUND THEM!

...AND HE'S TRYING TO KILL US!

HE SHALL NOT HAVE THE CHANCE!
I HAVE TRAVELED HALF THE WORLD
TO SLAY MONSTERS AND SLAY
THEM I SHALL!

THAT BLOW WOULD HAVE
STOPPED THE BULL OF HEAVEN
AND IT HAS NO MARKED
EFFECT!

EXCEPT TO ALERT
THE ONE CALLED
FRANKLIN TO MY
PRESENCE!



AND A FEW FEET AWAY...

I DON'T RECOGNIZE OUR
NEW PLAYMATE THERE AND
I DON'T THINK REED
DOES EITHER.

BUT I'M
BETTING HE MAY
BE ABLE TO
DAMAGE
FRANKLIN IF
HE REALLY
UNCORKS!

WHICH MEANS,
WE'VE GOT TO
WIN THIS FIGHT
AND FAST BEFORE
FRANKLIN GETS
HURT!

HEADS UP,
TINKER-
TOY!

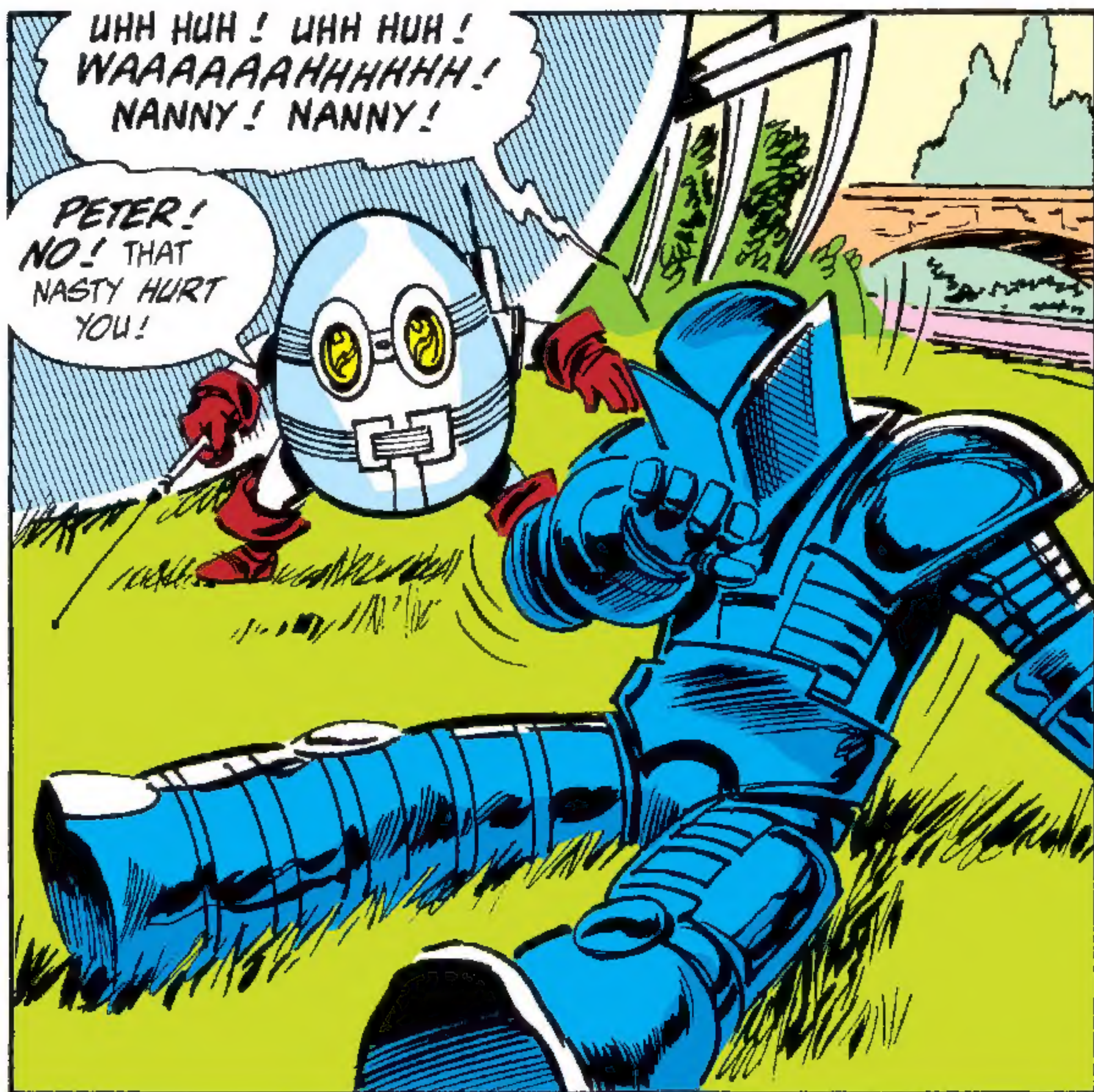
I'M STILL
NURSING A
GRUDGE AFTER
YOU BOYS NAILED
ME FROM
BEHIND!*

SO LET'S
TRY A LITTLE
APPLIED
LEVERAGE!

*LAST ISSUE.

SPRANG!

OOO
OFF!



THAT'S IT! WE'VE ALL BEEN
FIGHTING A HOLDING ACTION
UP TILL NOW...

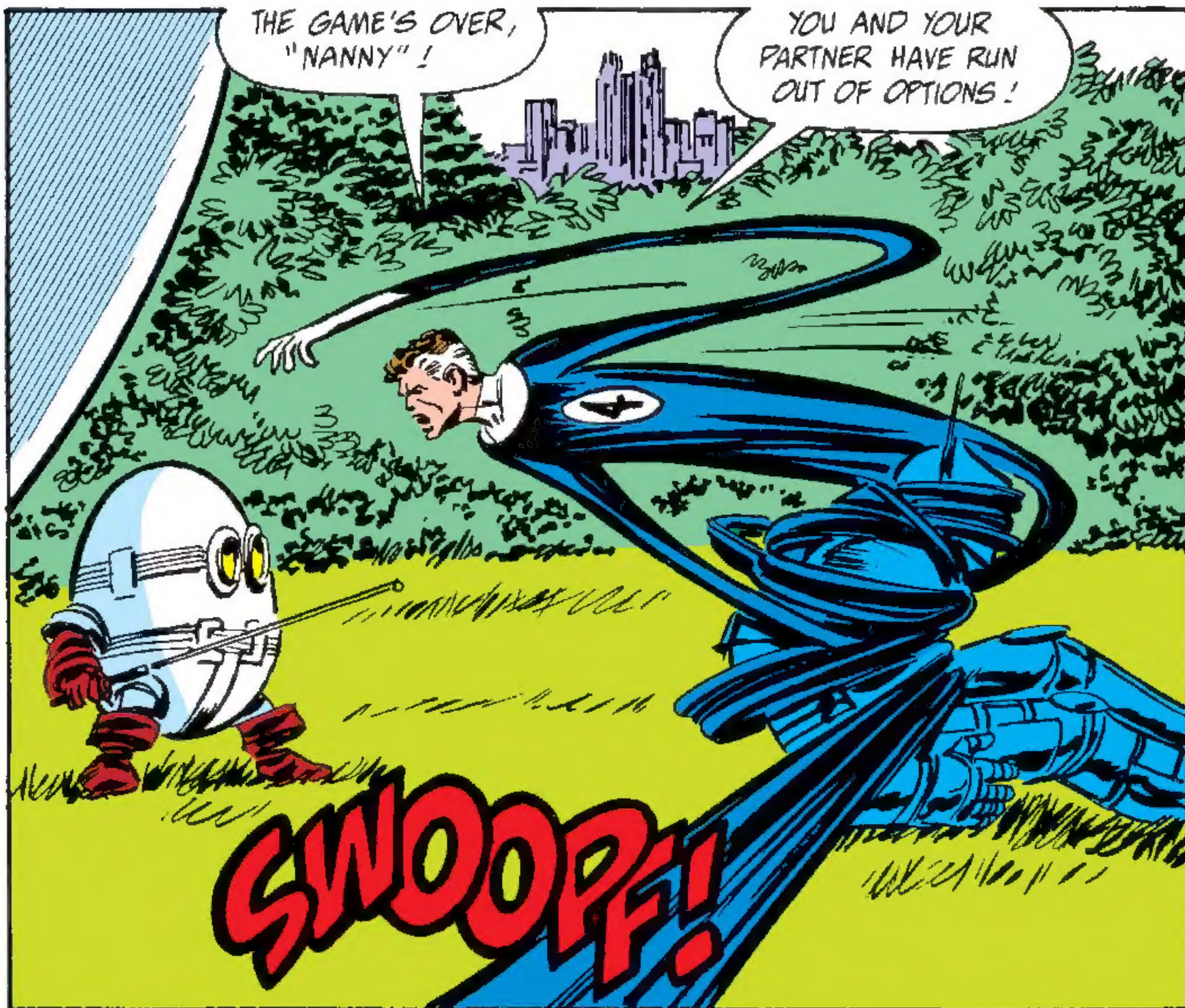
...BECAUSE WE
DIDN'T HAVE A
HANDLE ON
OUR ENEMIES!

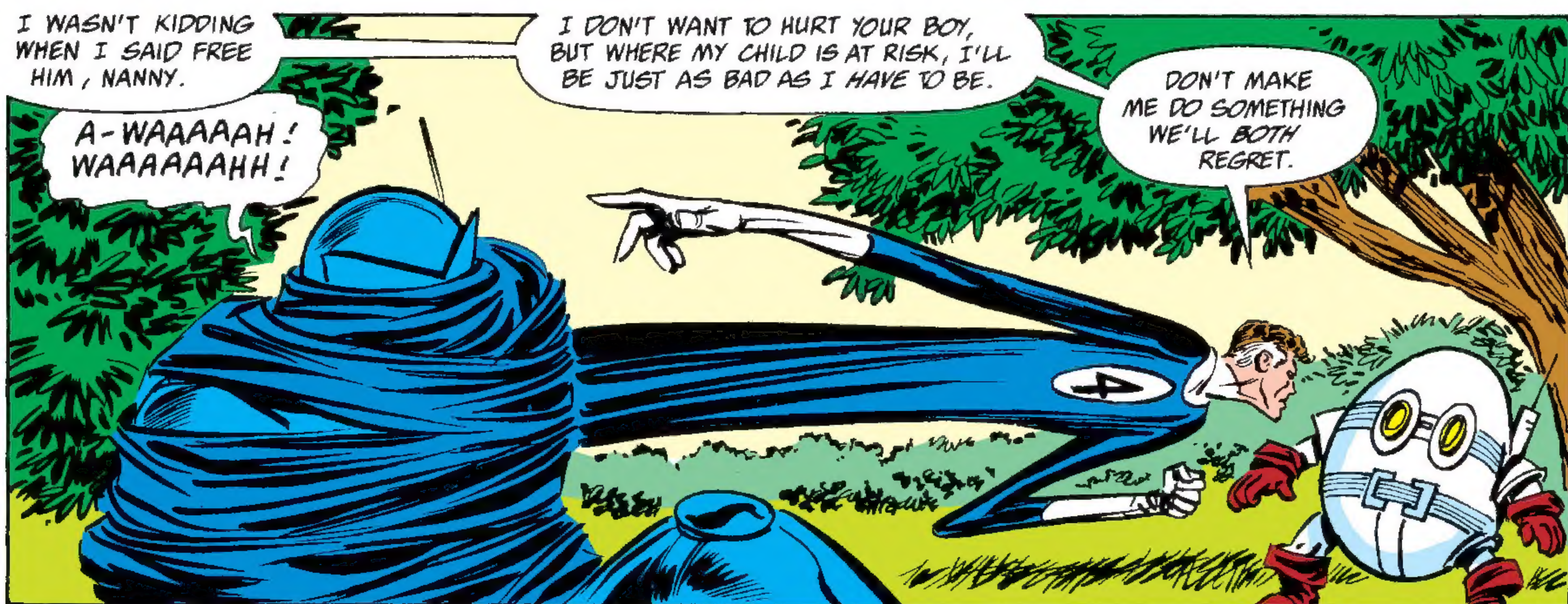
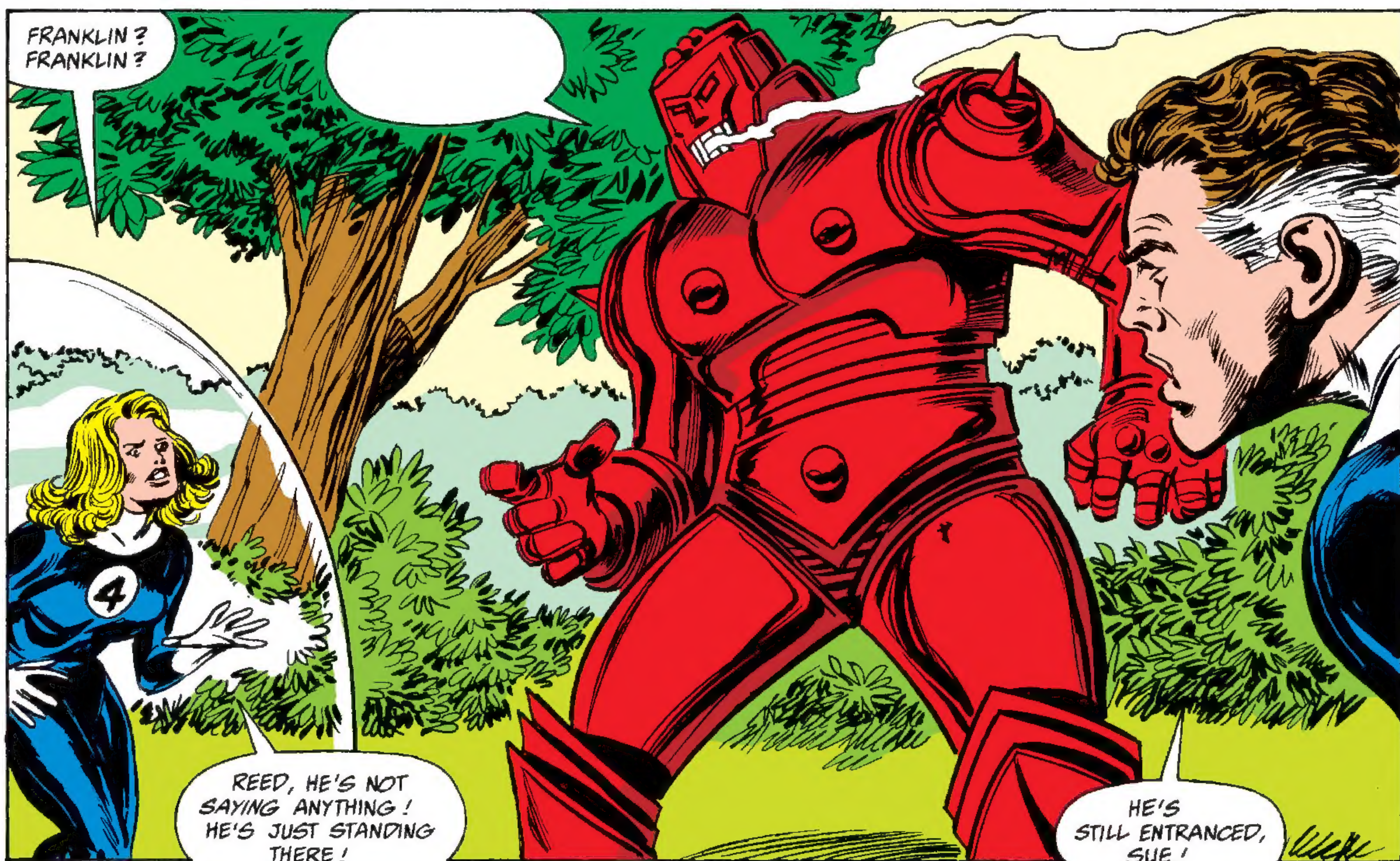
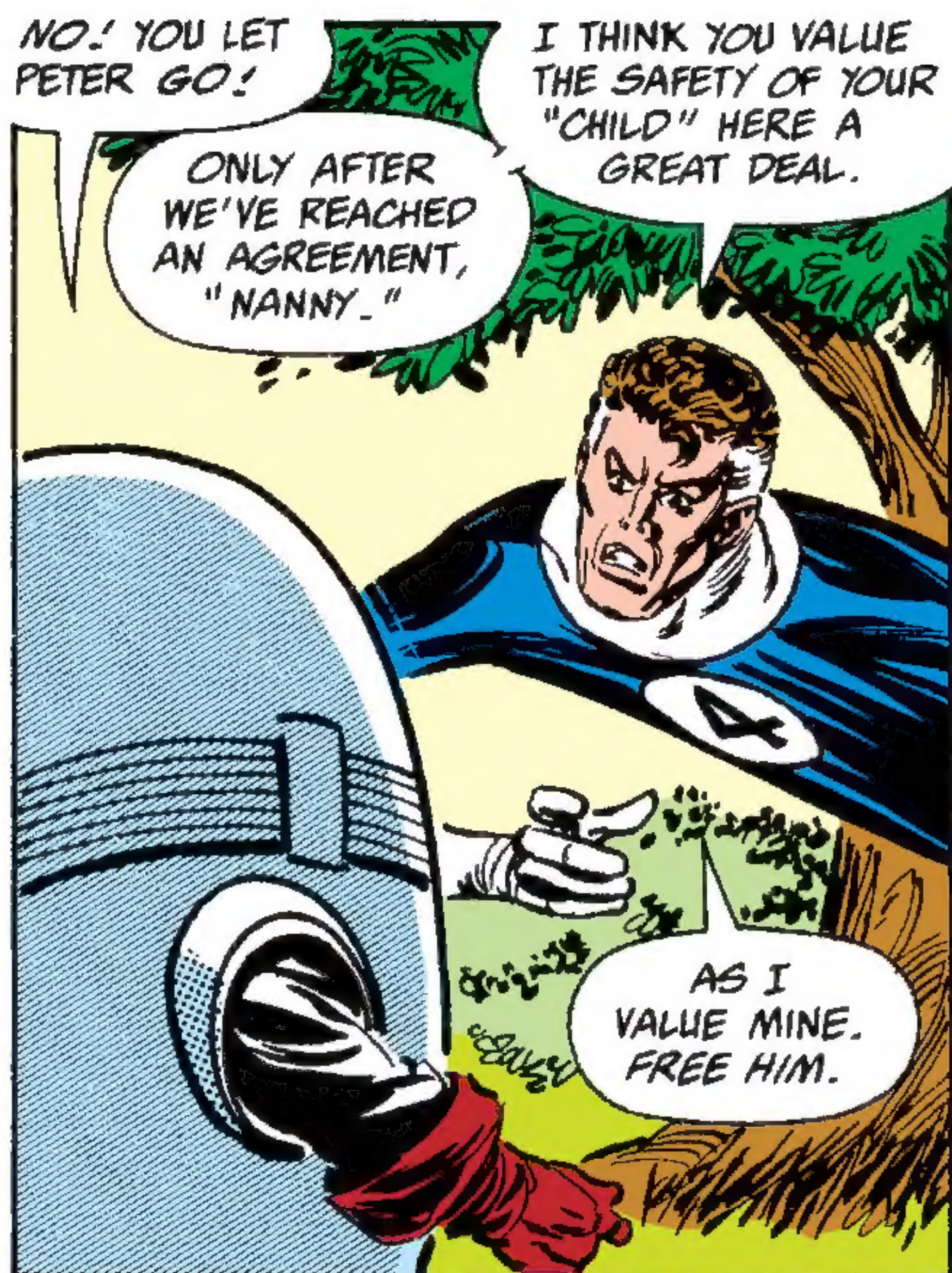
WE'VE
JUST
FOUND
ONE!



THE GAME'S OVER,
"NANNY"!

YOU AND YOUR
PARTNER HAVE RUN
OUT OF OPTIONS!





MASTER, SEE
WHAT KLYTUS
HAS FOUND!



THE TIME IS NEAR WHEN THE
GOBLIN QUEEN* WILL PLAY
HER ALL IMPORTANT ROLE IN
THIS ON-GOING DRAMA...

...LITTLE RECKONING
THAT SHE SHALL BE A
SACRIFICIAL LAMB
INSTEAD OF A RULING
TIGER.

SHE MAY
NOT RELISH
THE CHANGE
IN ROLE.

AND THOUGH
SHE LIES IN THE
HOLLOW OF MY
HAND, SHE'S
WORRISOME.

TOO MUCH
POWER. TOO LITTLE
OBEDIENCE.

THIS... DARK
CHILDE YOU HAVE
FOUND COULD AID
US, KLYTUS.

*AS SEEN MORE FULLY IN
THE CURRENT ISSUES OF
X-MEN AND X-FACTOR!

POWER IS OUR WEAPON, AND
THE POWER OF SUCH A CHILD IS
INFINITELY CORRUPTABLE IN
OUR SERVICE!

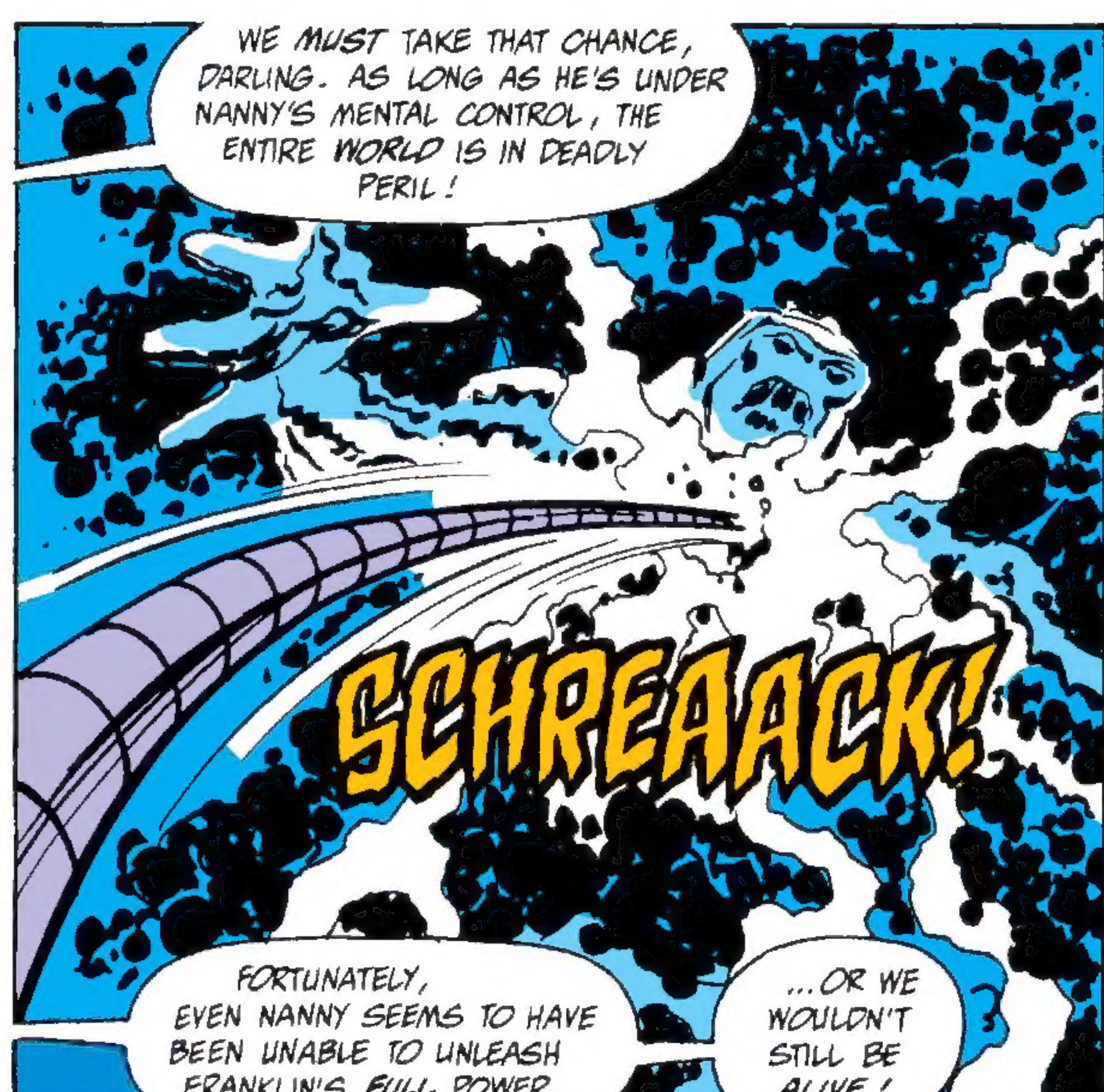
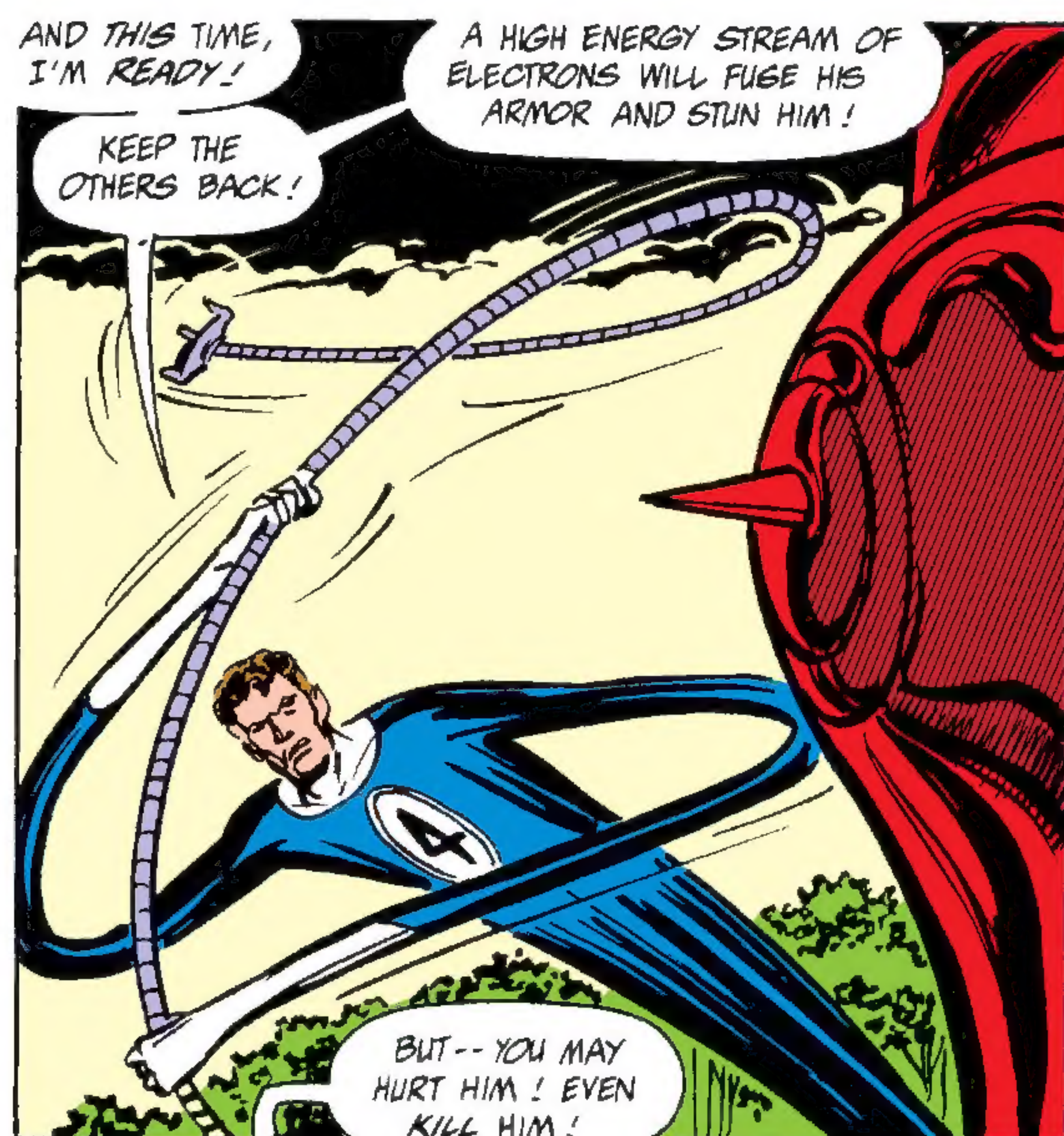
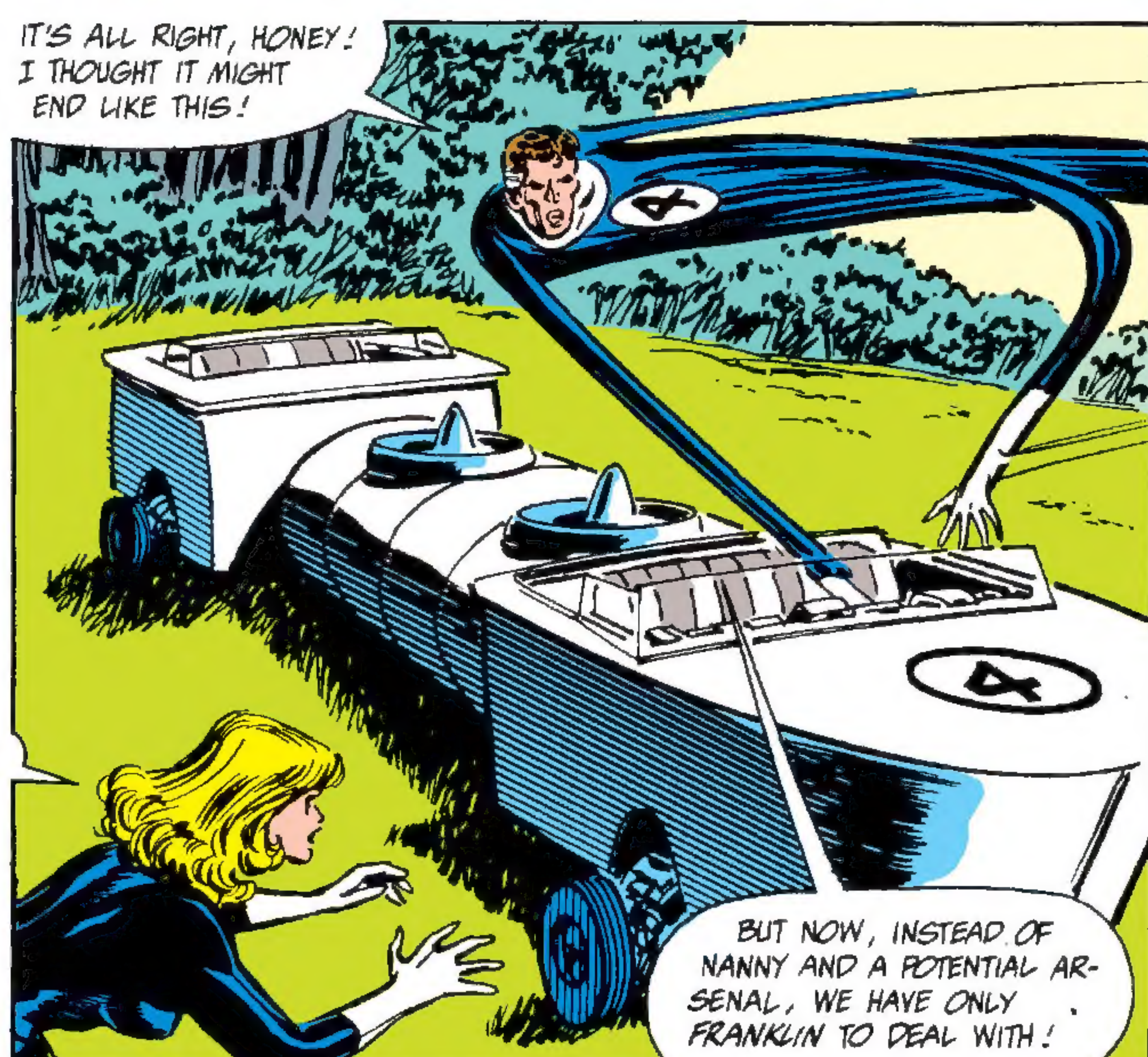
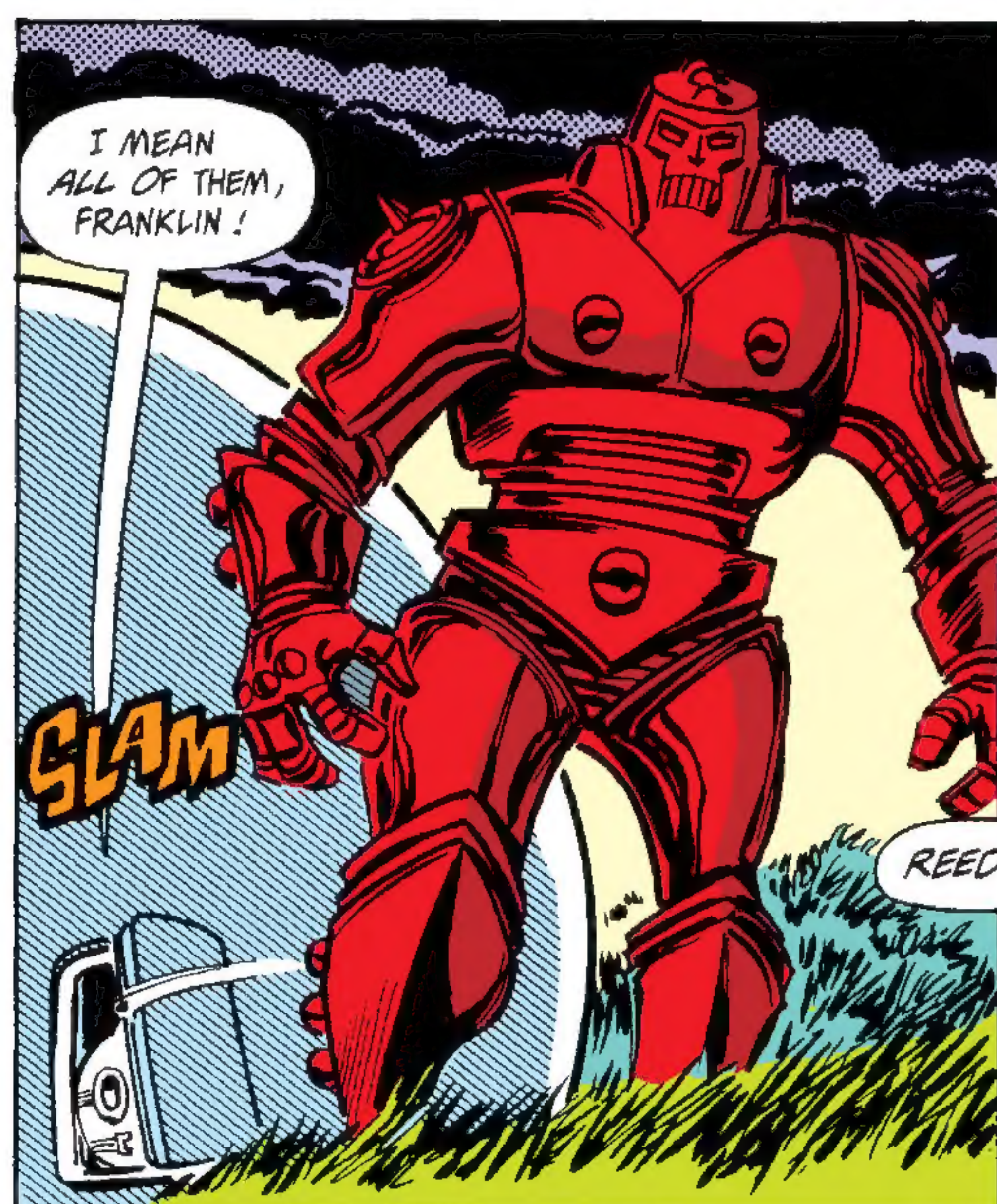
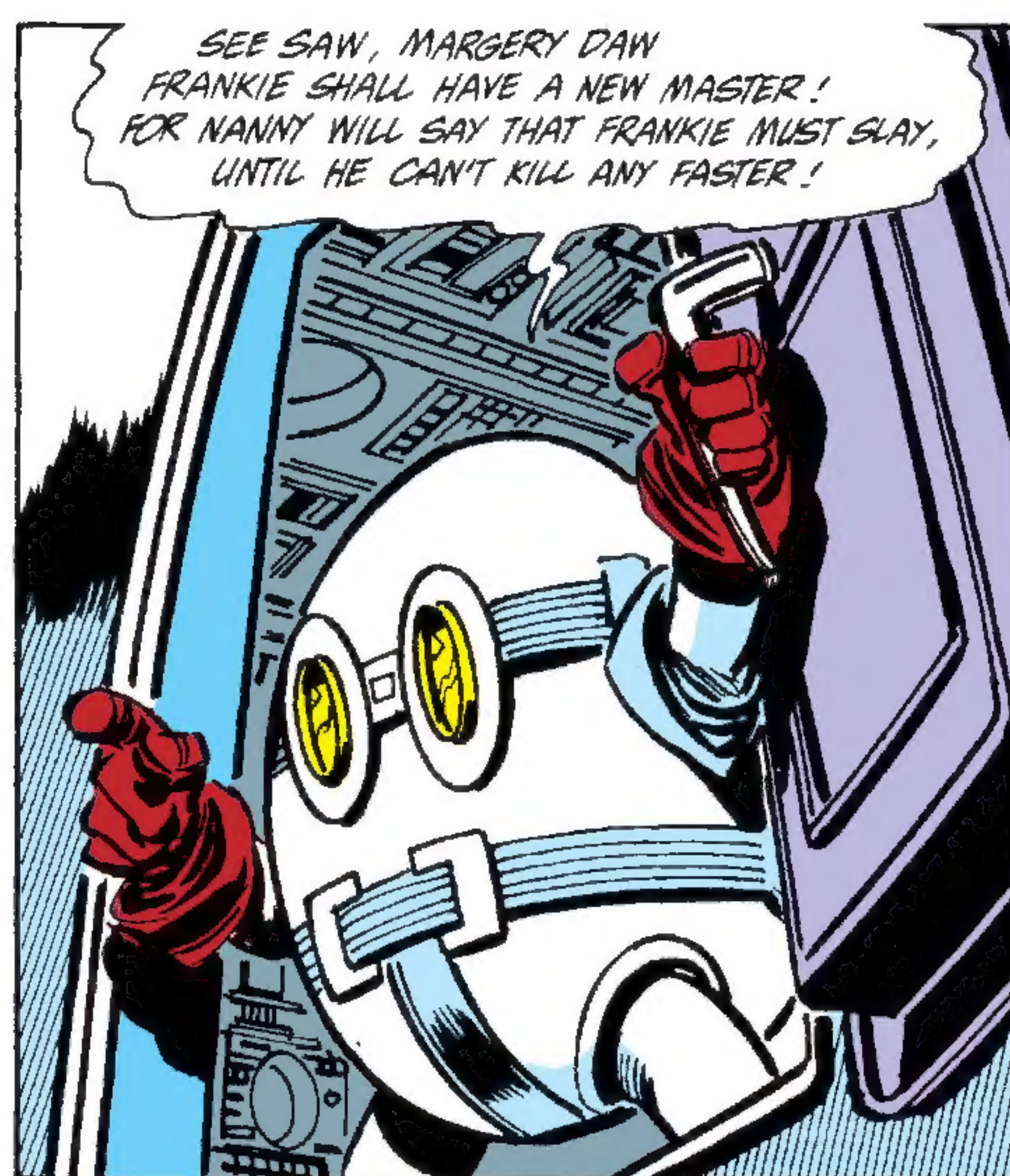
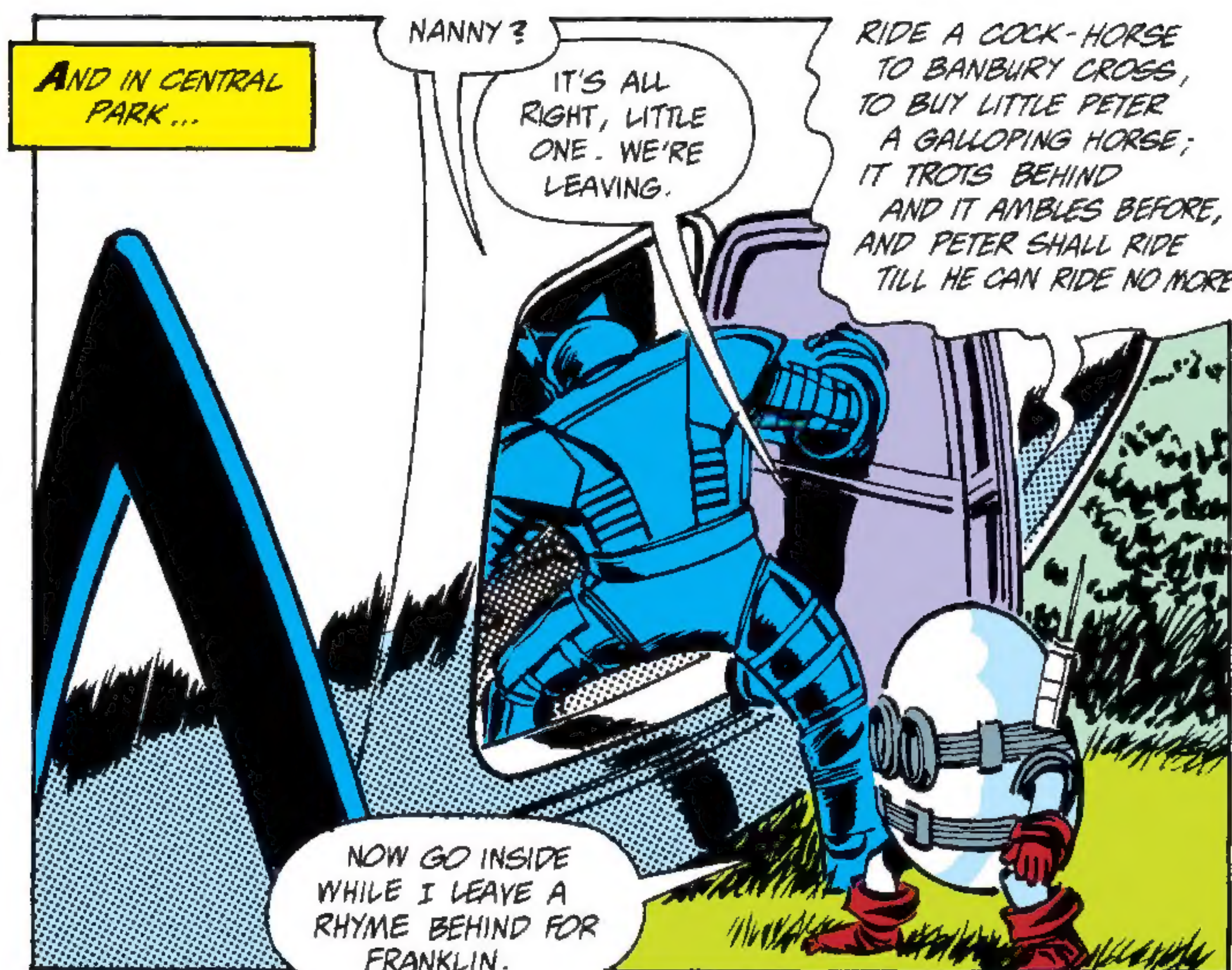
AND
S'YM,
MASTER
?

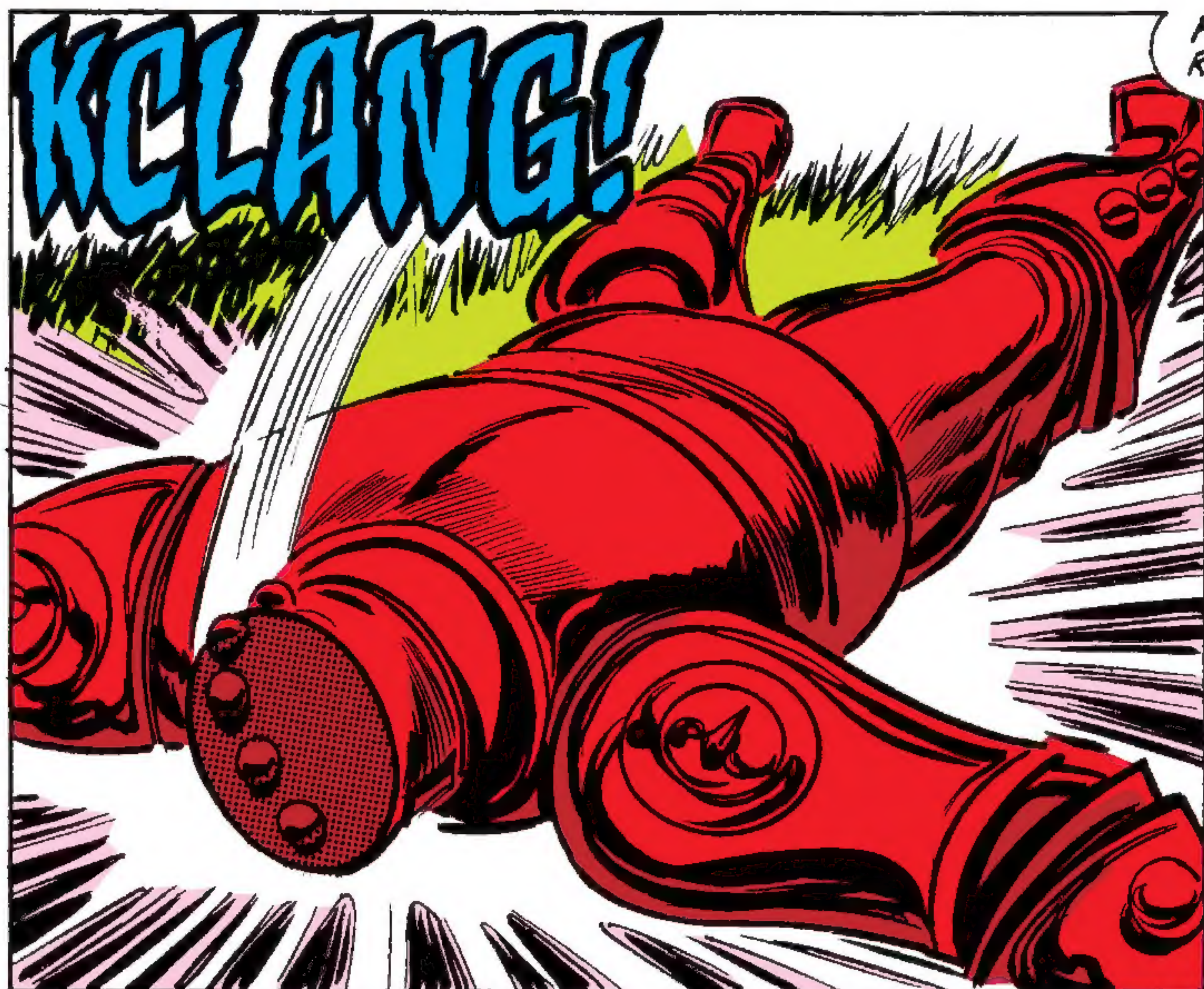
PAH! BARELY
WORTH A CANDLE.
WHEN THE DRAMA IS
FINISHED, HE SHALL
BE AN ETERNAL
PRISONER OF
LIMBO...

... WHILE WE,
WE SHALL RULE
THE WORLD!

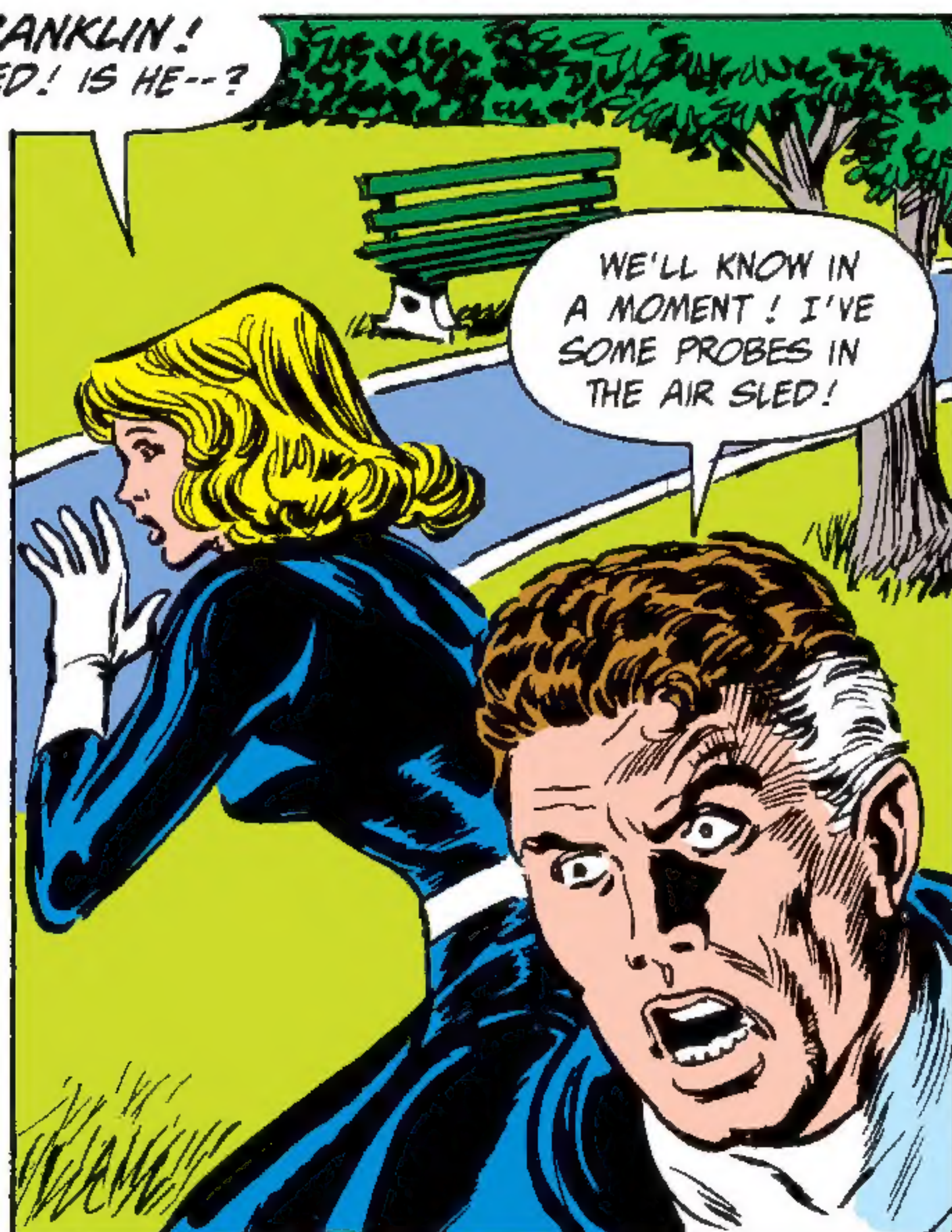
I GO TO FETCH
THIS NEW AND MOST
INTERESTING CHILDE!



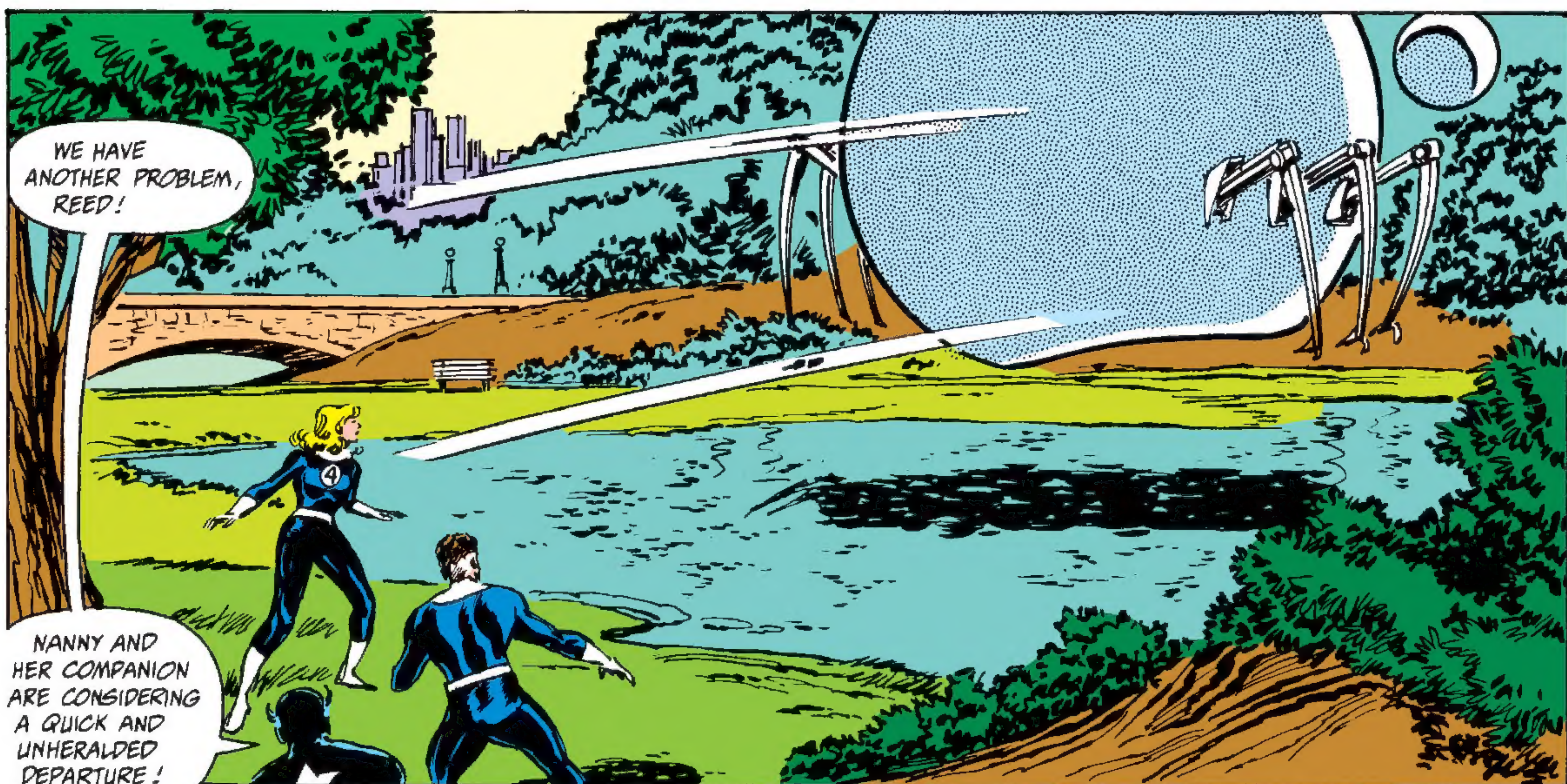




FRANKLIN!
REED! IS HE--?

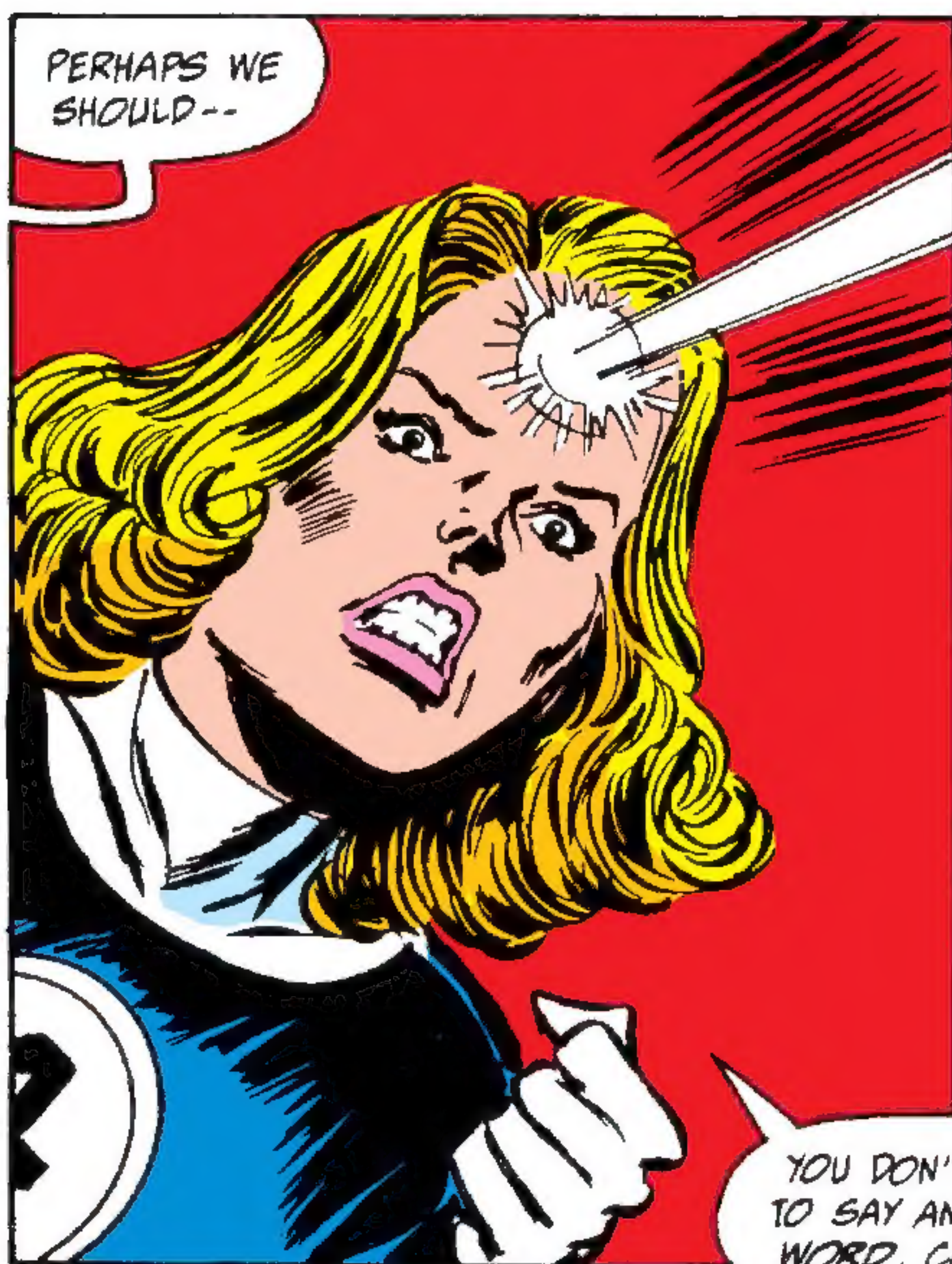


WE'LL KNOW IN
A MOMENT! I'VE
SOME PROBES IN
THE AIR SLED!



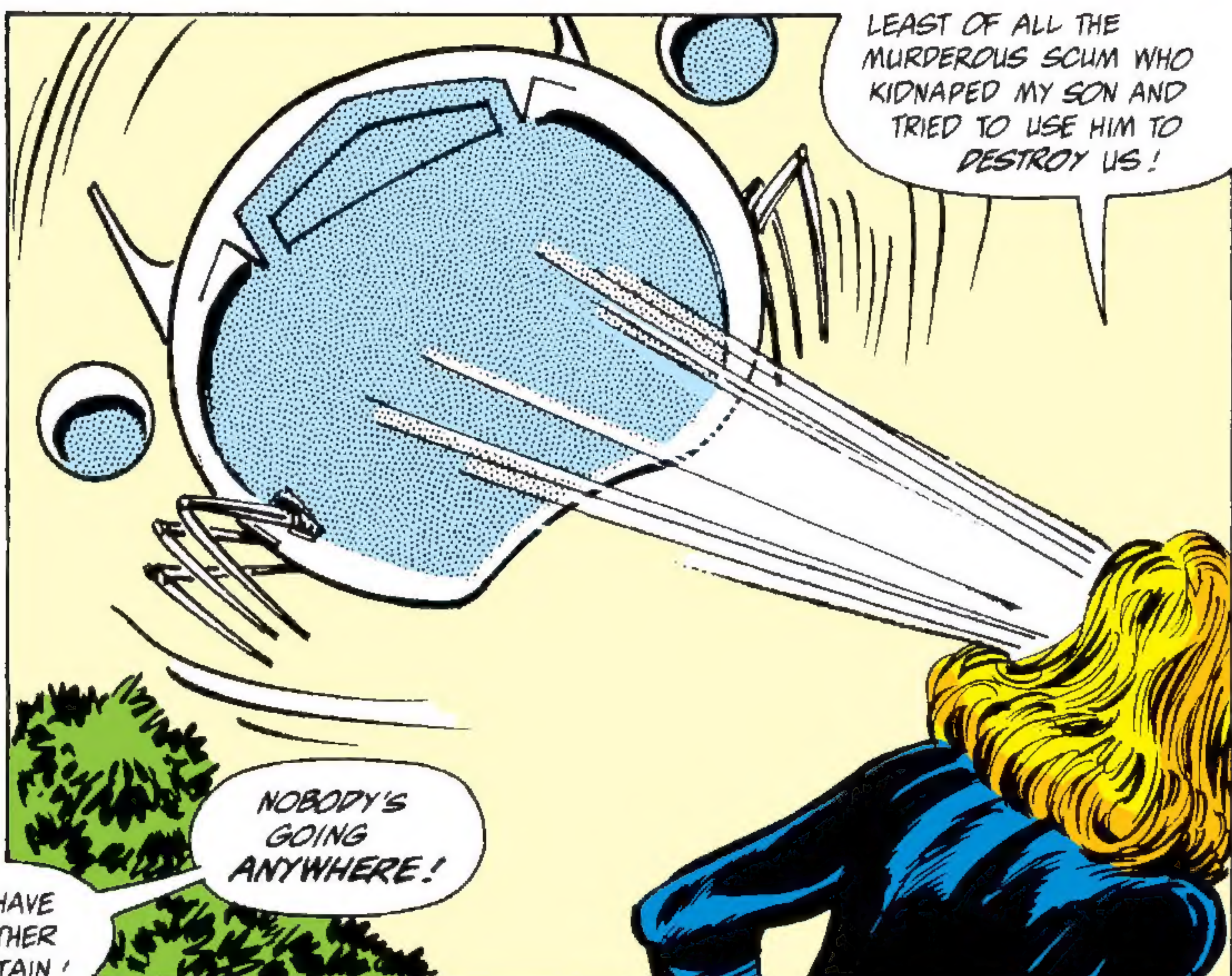
WE HAVE
ANOTHER PROBLEM,
REED!

NANNY AND
HER COMPANION
ARE CONSIDERING
A QUICK AND
UNHERALDED
DEPARTURE!



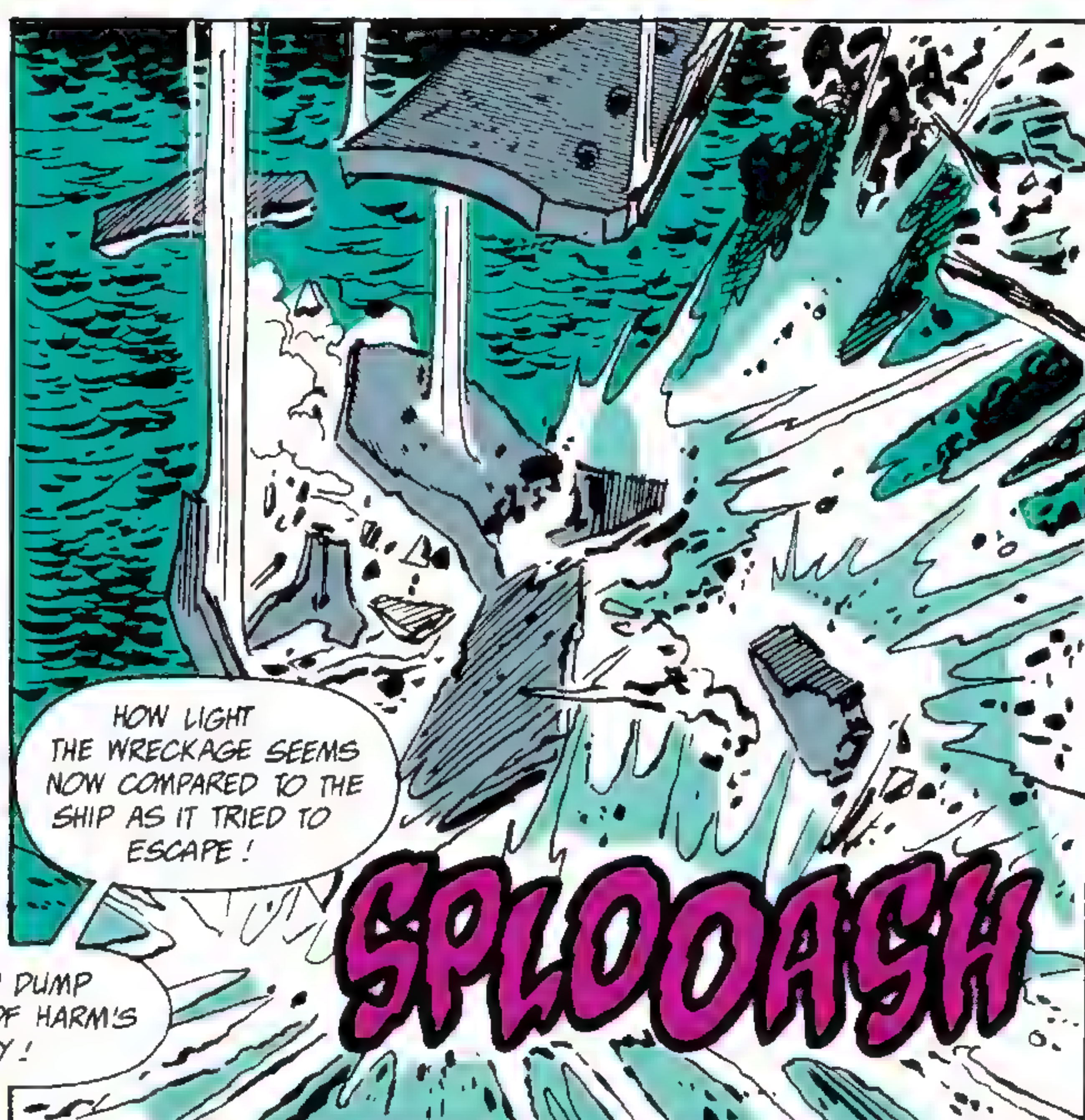
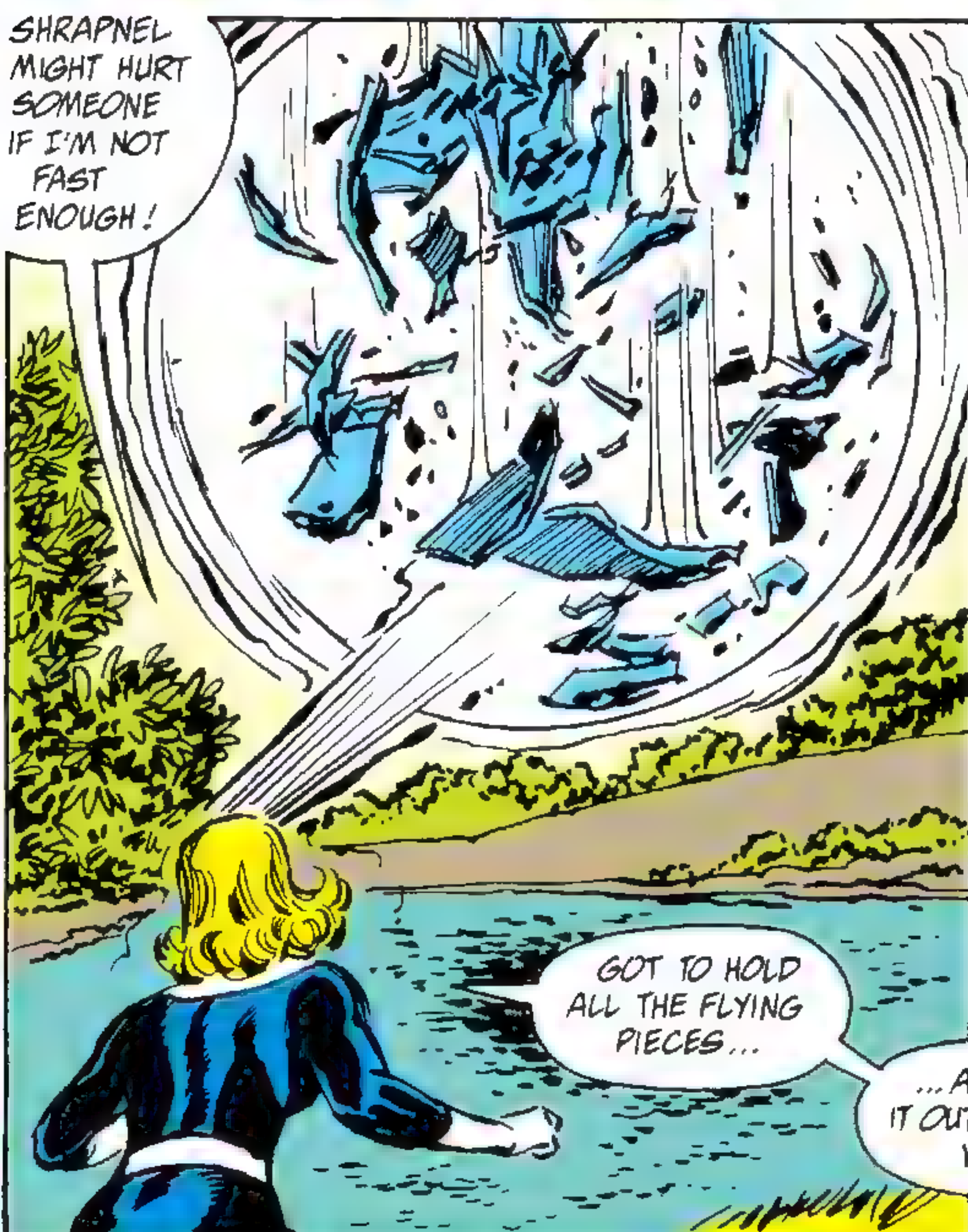
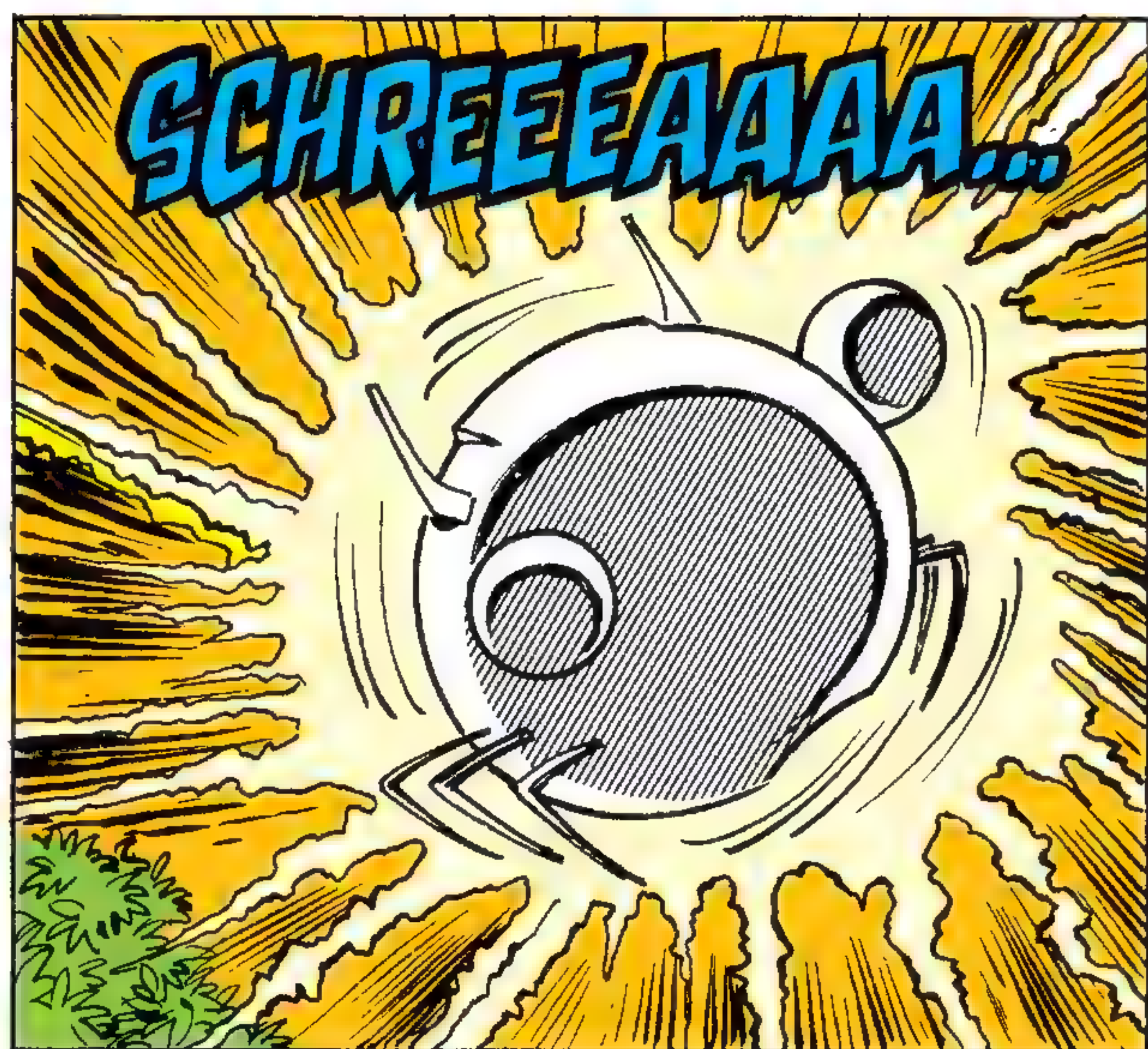
PERHAPS WE
SHOULD--

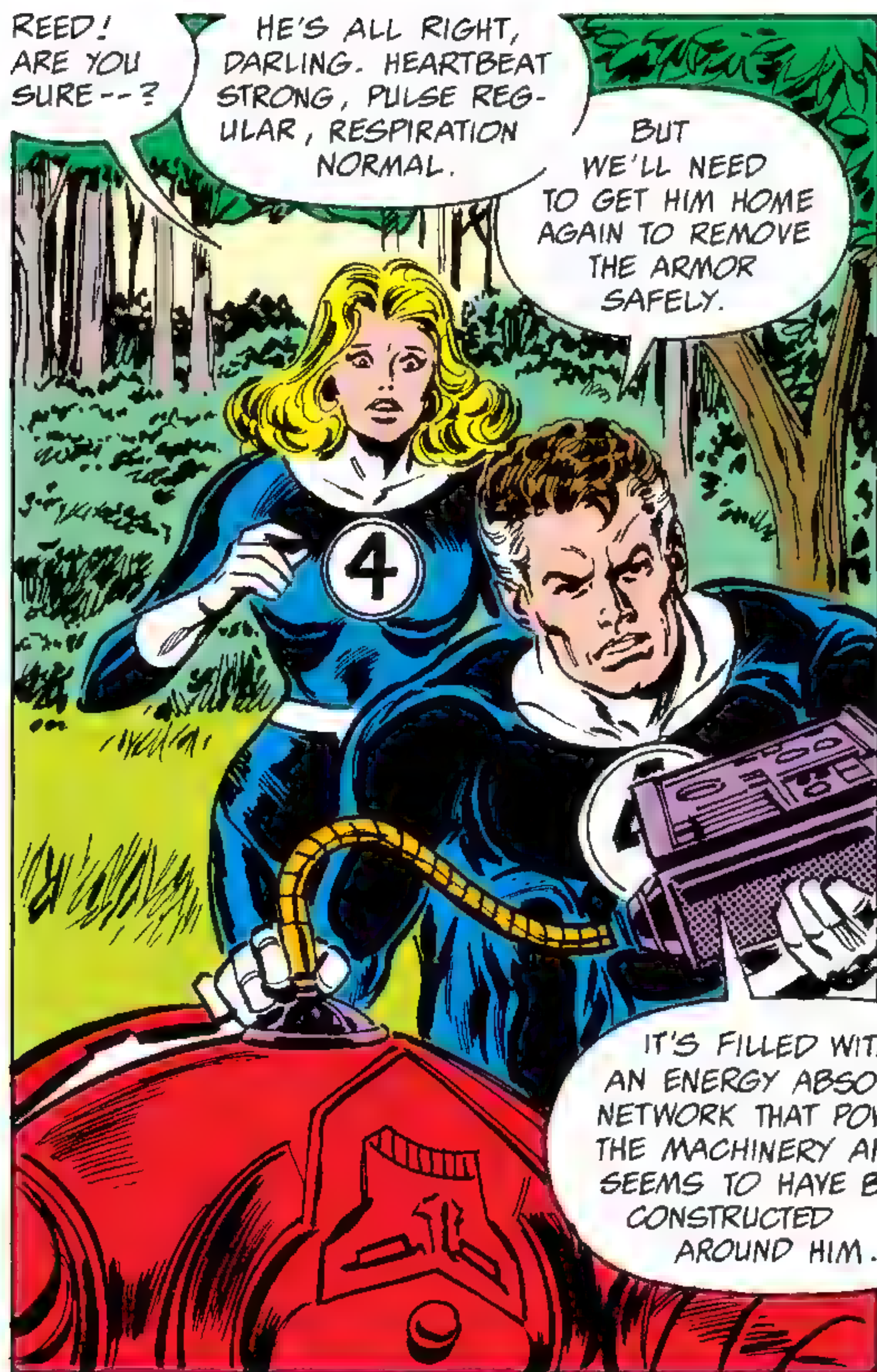
YOU DON'T HAVE
TO SAY ANOTHER
WORD, CAPTAIN!



LEAST OF ALL THE
MURDEROUS SCUM WHO
KIDNAPED MY SON AND
TRIED TO USE HIM TO
DESTROY US!

NOBODY'S
GOING
ANYWHERE!





REED!
ARE YOU
SURE--?

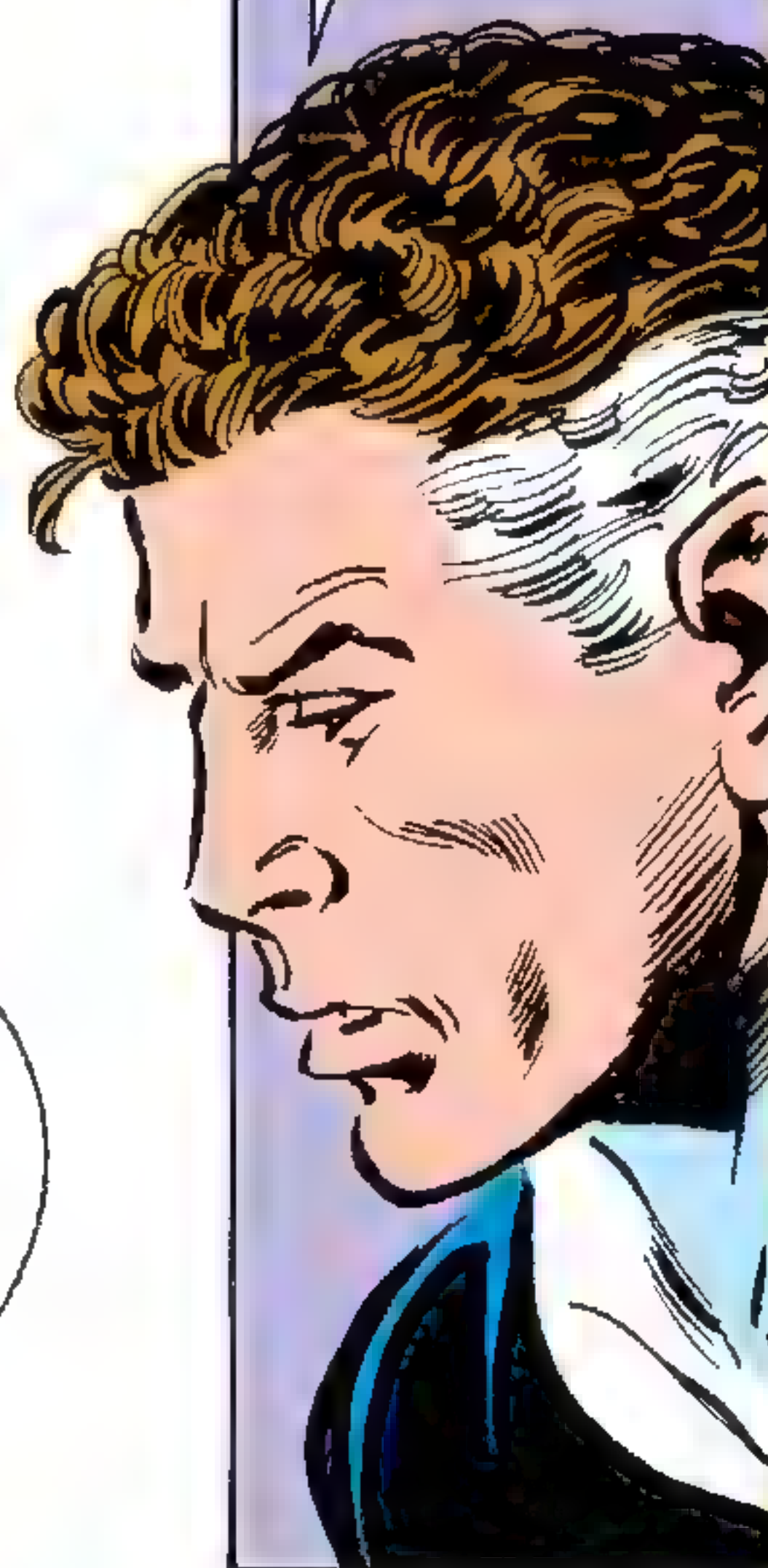
HE'S ALL RIGHT,
DARLING. HEARTBEAT
STRONG, PULSE REG-
ULAR, RESPIRATION
NORMAL.

BUT
WE'LL NEED
TO GET HIM HOME
AGAIN TO REMOVE
THE ARMOR
SAFELY.

IT'S FILLED WITH
AN ENERGY ABSORBING
NETWORK THAT POWERS
THE MACHINERY AND IT
SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN
CONSTRUCTED
AROUND HIM.

LOOKS LIKE
NANNY DIDN'T EXPECT
TO LET HIM OUT
AGAIN.

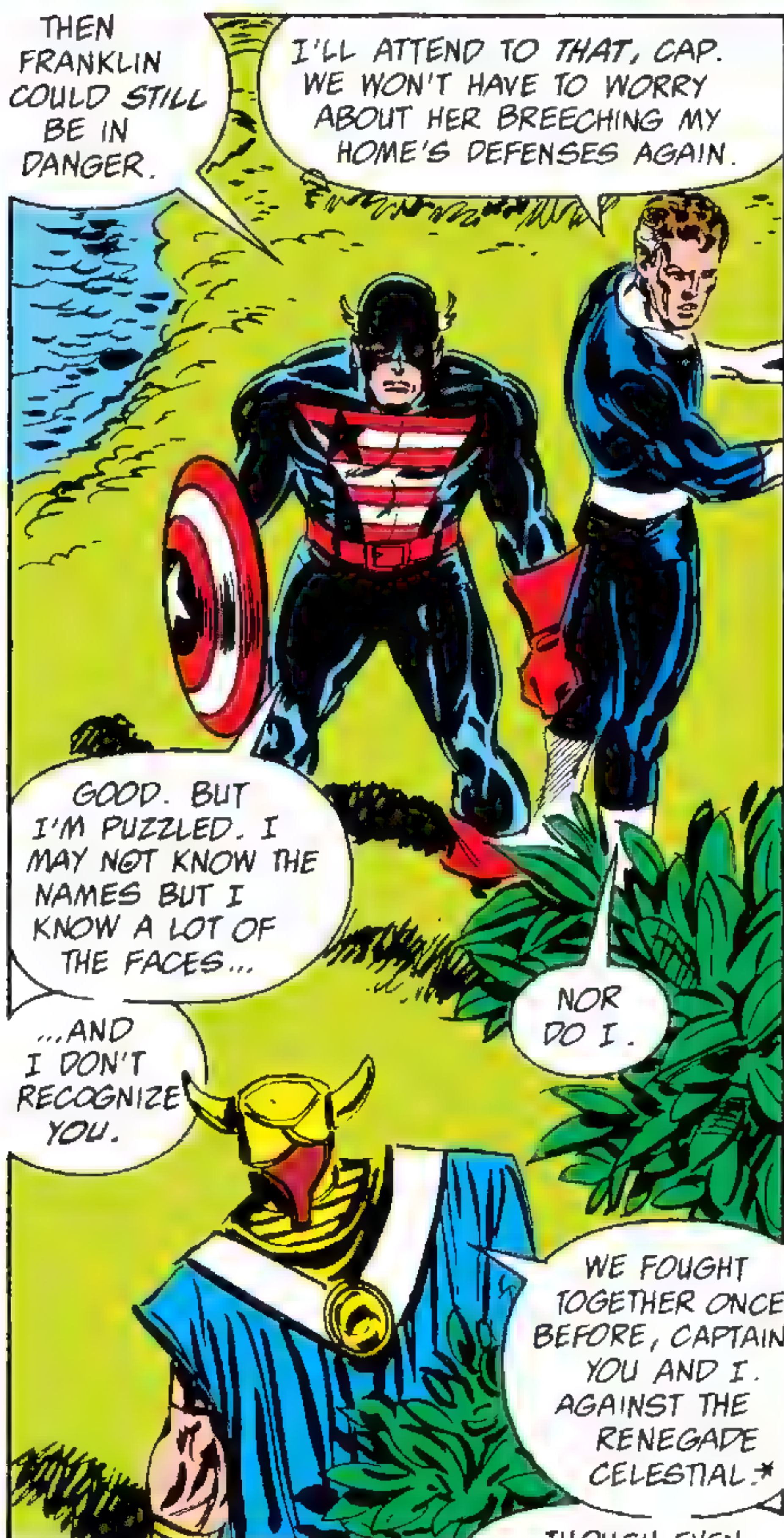
AND THERE'S
TECHNOLOGY HERE I'M
UNFAMILIAR WITH. A
PITY IT DIED WITH ITS
BUILDER.



IT
DIDN'T.

THERE ISN'T
ENOUGH WRECKAGE
HERE TO ACCOUNT
FOR THAT ENTIRE
VESSEL.

HOWEVER
SHE DID IT,
NANNY
MANAGED TO
JETTISON A
DECOY AND
ESCAPE.



THEN
FRANKLIN
COULD STILL
BE IN
DANGER.

I'LL ATTEND TO THAT, CAP.
WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY
ABOUT HER BREACHING MY
HOME'S DEFENSES AGAIN.

GOOD. BUT
I'M PUZZLED. I
MAY NOT KNOW THE
NAMES BUT I
KNOW A LOT OF
THE FACES...

...AND
I DON'T
RECOGNIZE
YOU.

NOR
DO I.

WE FOUGHT
TOGETHER ONCE
BEFORE, CAPTAIN,
YOU AND I.
AGAINST THE
RENEGADE
CELESTIAL.*

* IN THE SECOND
ETERNALS LIMITED SERIES,
OH BEST BELOVED.

THOUGH EVEN
AS YOU, I WORE
DIFFERENT GARB. AND
I BORE NO NAME.

HAVE YOU A
NAME NOW?

I HAVE HAD
MANY. I WOKE
WHEN THE WORLD
WAS NEW AND
SLEW DRAGONS.

ENKIDU WAS
MY BROTHER; ACHILLES
MY FRIEND. I HELPED
AENEAS SET HIS STANDARD
UPON THE PALATINE
HILL...



... AND STROVE
BESIDE DAVID IN
THE MOUNTAINS OF
JUDAH.

YOU'RE
THE NAMELESS
ETERNAL, THE
FORGOTTEN
ONE!

INDEED.
IT'S NICE TO BE
REMEMBERED.

IF ENKIDU WAS
TRULY YOUR BROTHER,
PERHAPS WE SHOULD CALL
YOU... GILGAMESH, MAN-
KIND'S MOST ANCIENT
MONSTER SLAYER.

YOU ARE WELL
READ, MR. RICHARDS.
IT WAS MY NAME...
ONCE. NOT THE FIRST,
BUT IT WILL SERVE.



AND IT MAY BE APPROPRIATE. THE CITY IS UNDER ATTACK AND THERE ARE NO AVENGERS TO DEFEND HER.

I RECENTLY HAD OCCASION TO RECRUIT A TEMPORARY TEAM OF RESERVE MEMBERS.*

NOW, I AM MORE CONVINCED THAN EVER THAT THE AVENGERS MUST LIVE AGAIN!

IF YOU INTEND TO HUNT MONSTERS, I WOULD JOIN YOU.

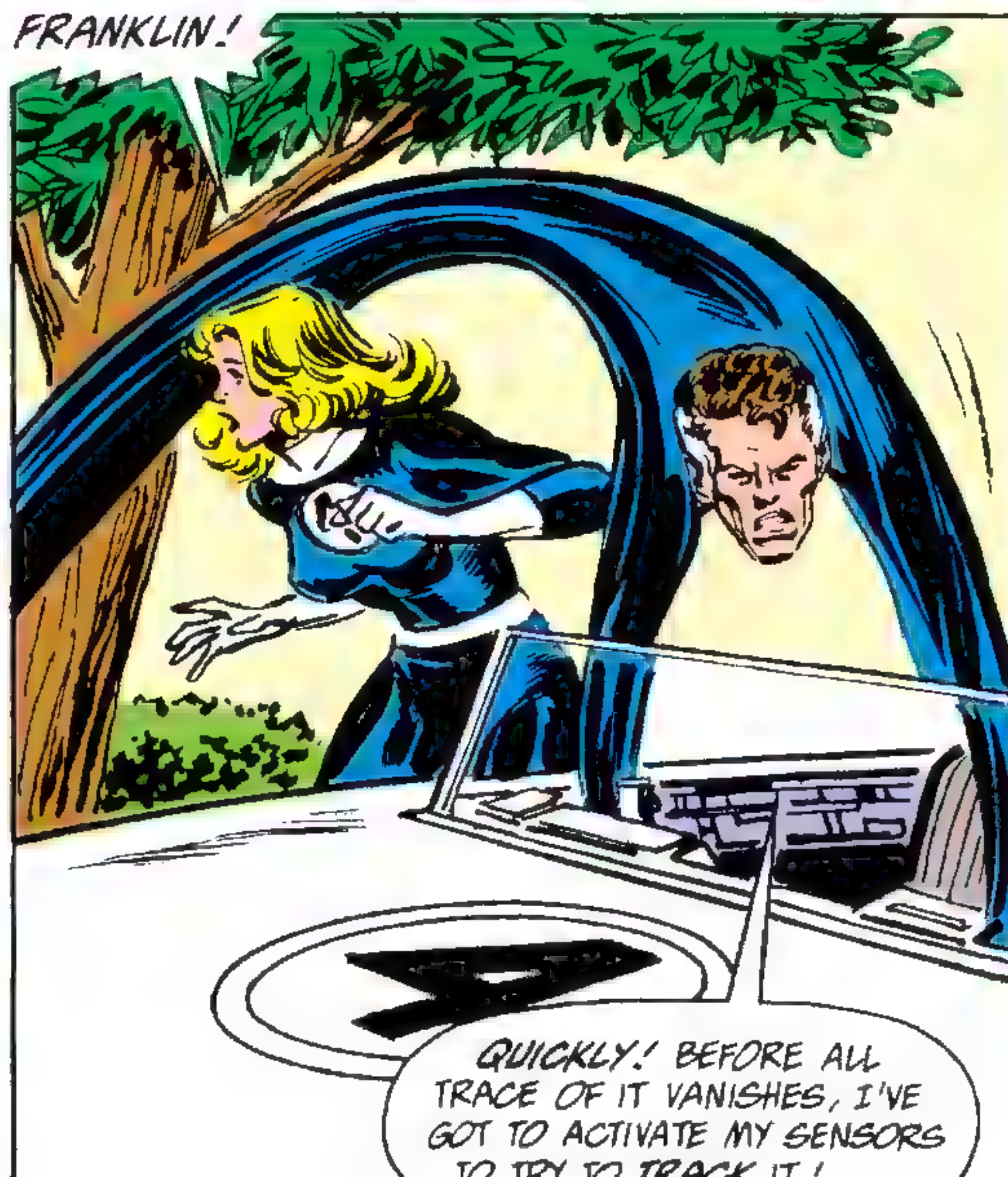
* AS SEEN IN THE AVENGERS ANNUAL.

SUE AND I RETIRED FROM THE FANTASTIC FOUR TO DEVOTE MORE TIME TO FRANKLIN.

AND THERE ARE A LOT OF HEROES AROUND NOW. NOT LIKE IT WAS WHEN WE FIRST CREATED THE FF.

HOW MANY HAVE YOUR EXPERIENCE, MR. RICHARDS?

SHOULD YOU NOT RECONSIDER--



INCREDIBLE! WHATEVER SORT OF TELEPORTATION THAT CREATURE EMPLOYED, IT'S WITHOUT ANY SORT OF ENERGY SIGNATURE!



REED, YOU DON'T MEAN YOU... CAN'T FIND HIM!

I DON'T KNOW YET, HONEY. BUT REST ASSURED, WE AREN'T GOING TO STOP LOOKING UNTIL WE DO!

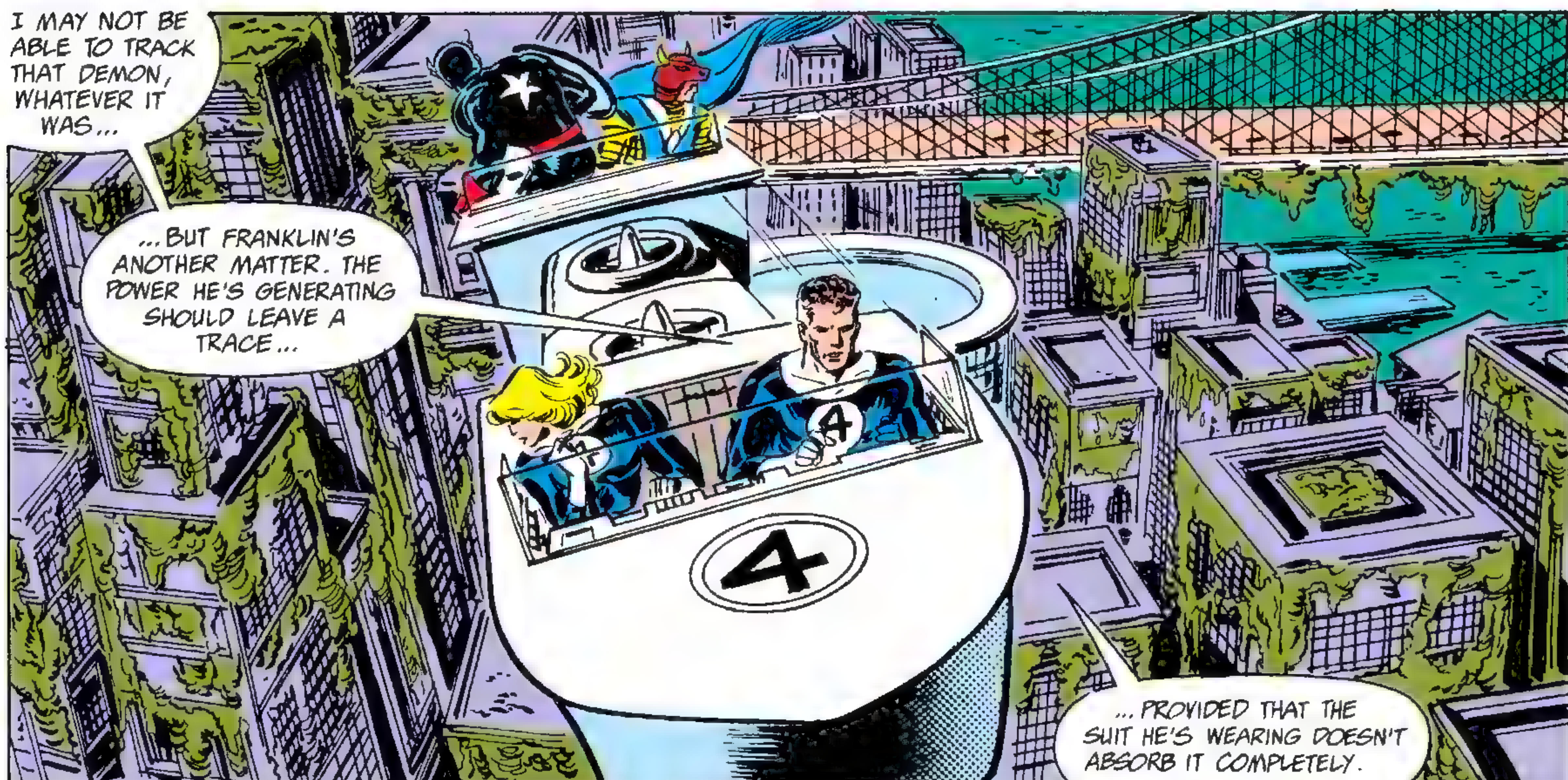
REED, I... I'M SORRY. I JUST DIDN'T REACT IN TIME.

DON'T BLAME YOURSELF, CAPTAIN. YOU DID YOUR BEST AND NONE OF THE REST OF US EVEN HAD TIME TO MOVE.



NOW WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DO OUR BEST!

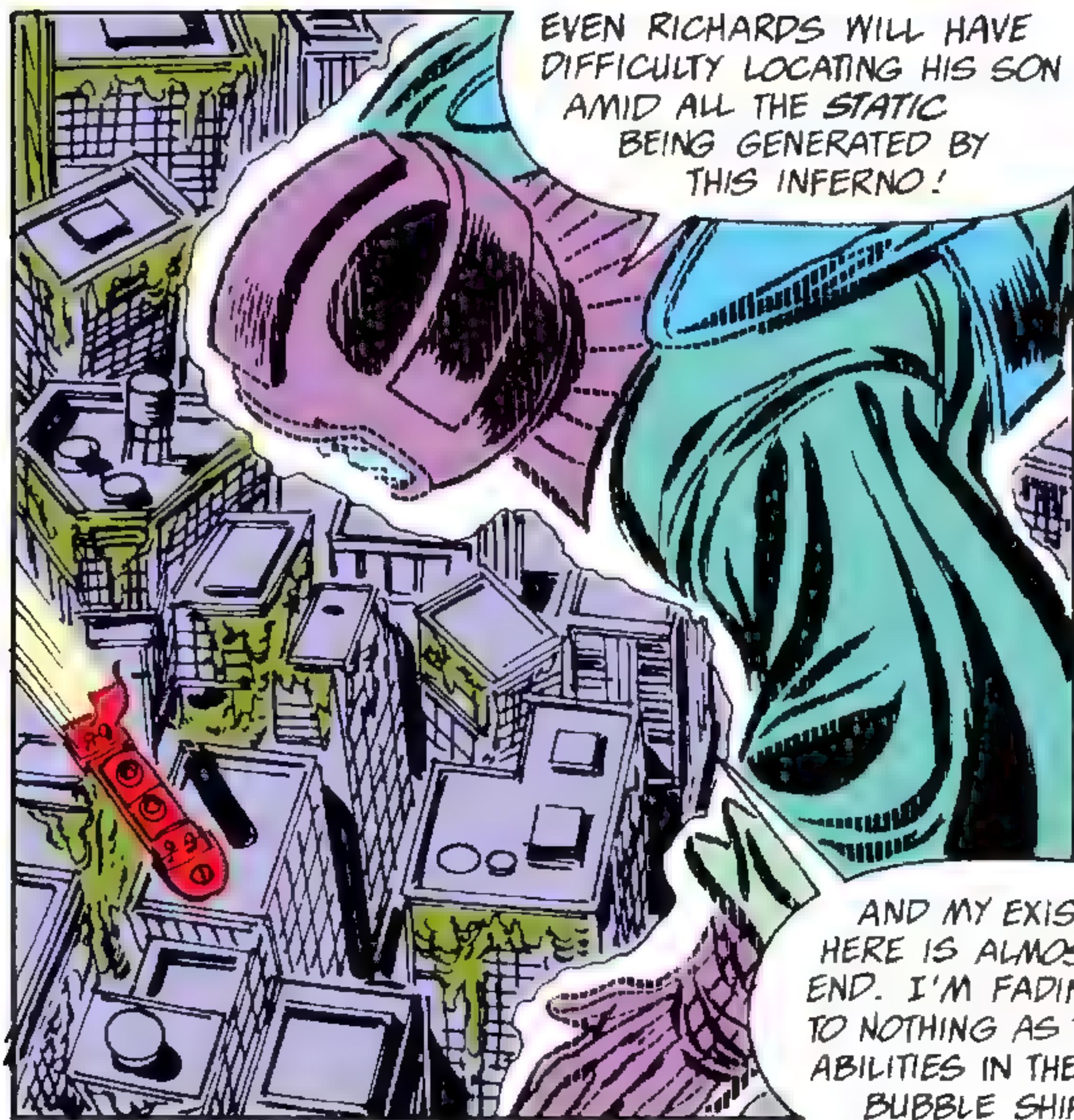
I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO TRACK THAT DEMON, WHATEVER IT WAS...



...BUT FRANKLIN'S ANOTHER MATTER. THE POWER HE'S GENERATING SHOULD LEAVE A TRACE...

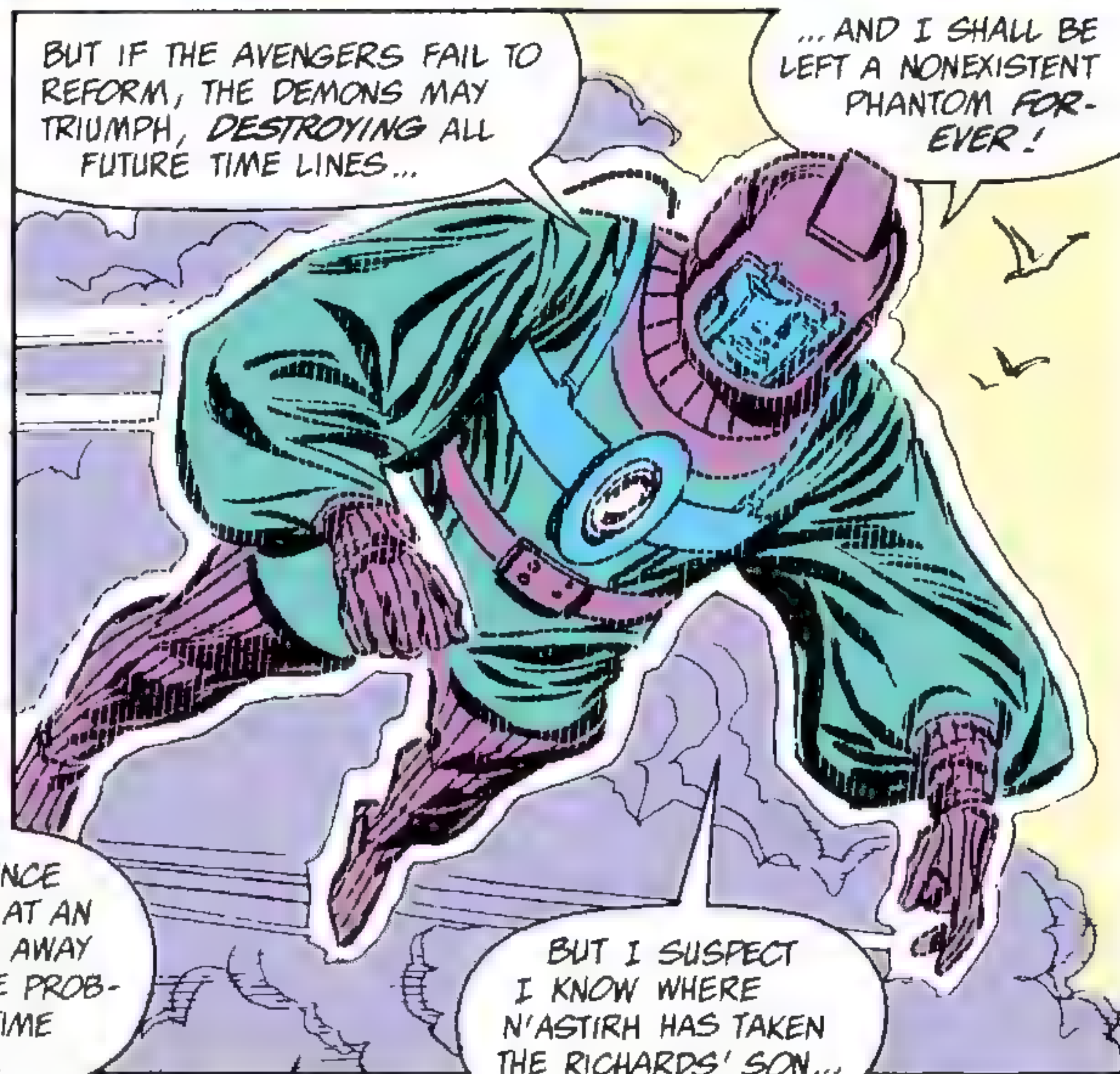
...PROVIDED THAT THE SUIT HE'S WEARING DOESN'T ABSORB IT COMPLETELY.

EVEN RICHARDS WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY LOCATING HIS SON AMID ALL THE STATIC BEING GENERATED BY THIS INFERNO!



AND MY EXISTENCE HERE IS ALMOST AT AN END. I'M FADING AWAY TO NOTHING AS THE PROBABILITIES IN THE TIME BUBBLE SHIFT.

BUT IF THE AVENGERS FAIL TO REFORM, THE DEMONS MAY TRIUMPH, DESTROYING ALL FUTURE TIME LINES...



...AND I SHALL BE LEFT A NONEXISTENT PHANTOM FOR-
EVER!

BUT I SUSPECT I KNOW WHERE N'ASTIRH HAS TAKEN THE RICHARDS' SON...

...AND IN MY LAST SECONDS OF EXISTENCE, I WILL INSURE THAT THESE "PROTO-AVENGERS" STAND A CHANCE OF FINDING HIM!

THEREBY FIGHTING TOGETHER AND MAYBE HELPING TO CREATE A BOND BETWEEN THEM!

SPEEEEEEEEEEP!

AND IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE AS WELL!

KPFOOPH!

FUNNY. FOR A MOMENT, I THOUGHT--?

A PHANTOM OF THE IMAGINATION, I GUESS. WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM.

WHO, CAPTAIN?

"AN OLD AVENGERS' ENEMY WHO CERTAINLY WOULDN'T BE SITTING ON THE SIDELINES ROOTING FOR THE HOME TEAM IF HE WERE REALLY AROUND SOMEWHERE."

AT THAT SELF-SAME INSTANT, SOMEWHERE IN ALPHABET CITY IN A DIRTY CORNER OF NEW YORK...

...THE LAST DESPERATE CAST OF KANG BEARS FRUIT.

HERE WHERE THE HOPELESS LIVE AND THE DREAMERS DIE...

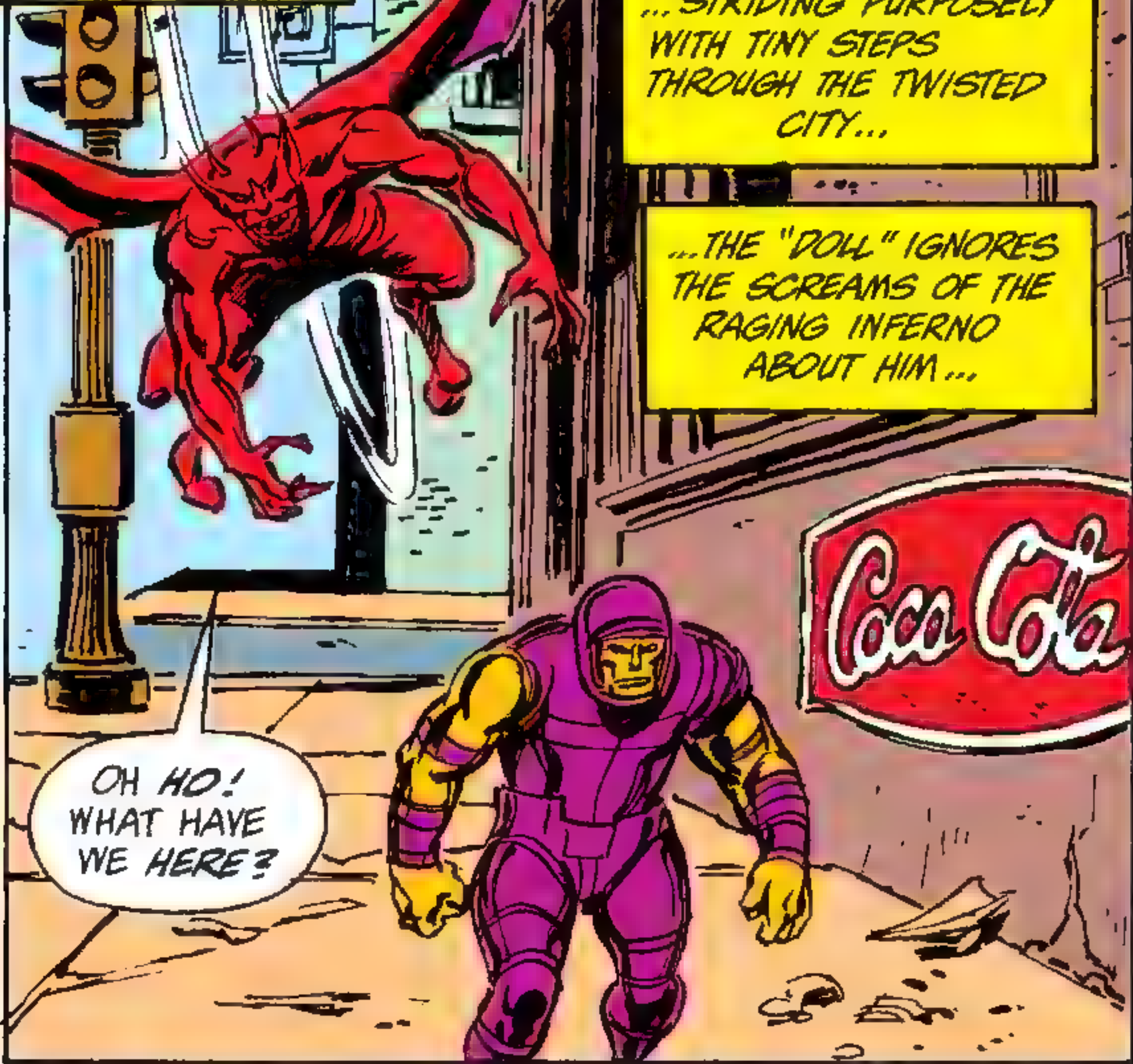
...IN THE DARKENED BASEMENT OF AN ABANDONED TENEMENT...

...THERE IS MOVEMENT.

AND SOMETHING THE SIZE OF A SMALL DOLL BEGINS TO STIR...

YES, MASTER. IT SHALL BE DONE!

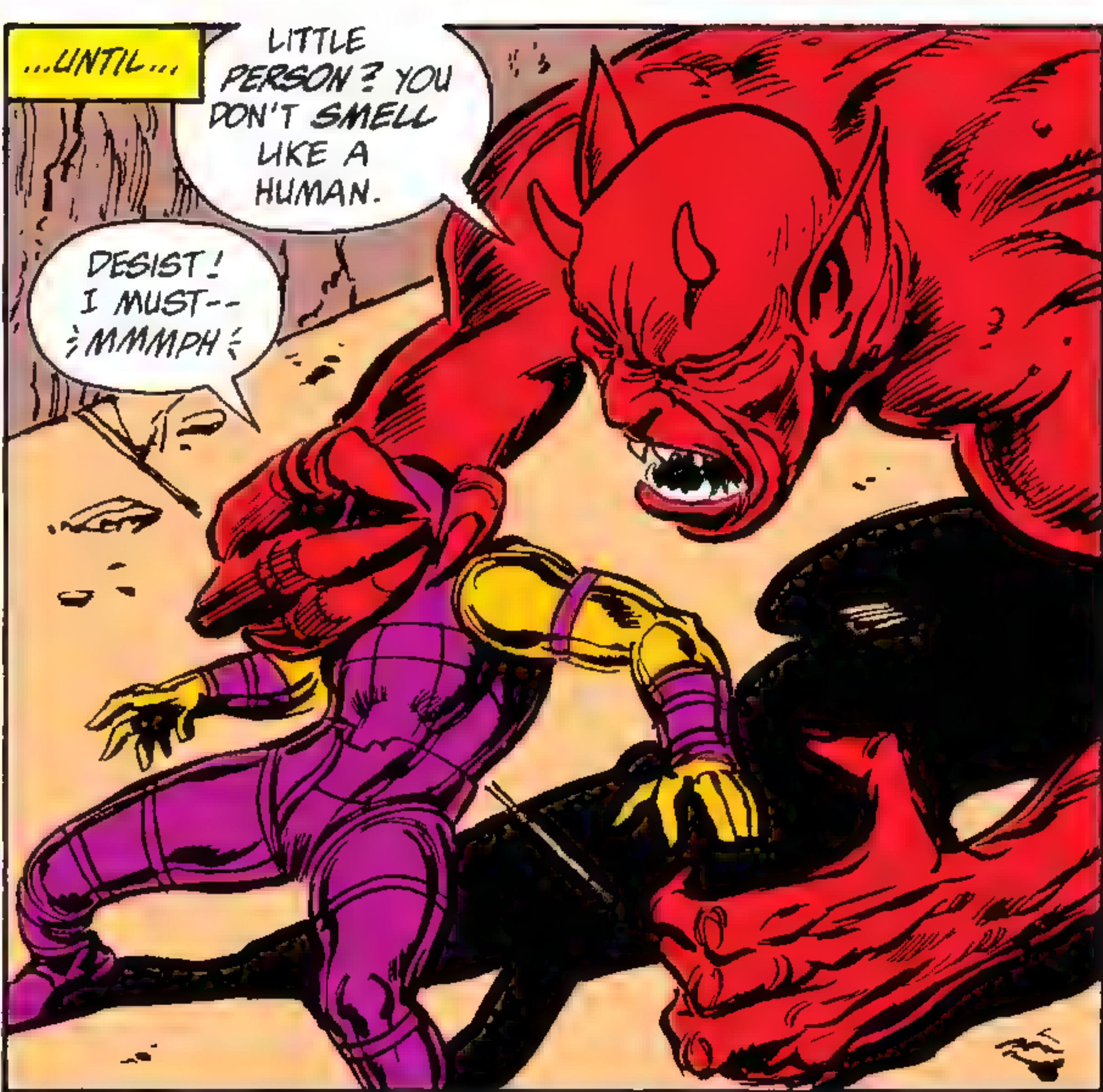
MOVING IN THE SHADOWS...



...STRIDING PURPOSELY WITH TINY STEPS THROUGH THE TWISTED CITY...

...THE "DOLL" IGNORES THE SCREAMS OF THE RAGING INFERNO ABOUT HIM...

OH HO! WHAT HAVE WE HERE?



...UNTIL...

LITTLE PERSON? YOU DON'T SMELL LIKE A HUMAN.

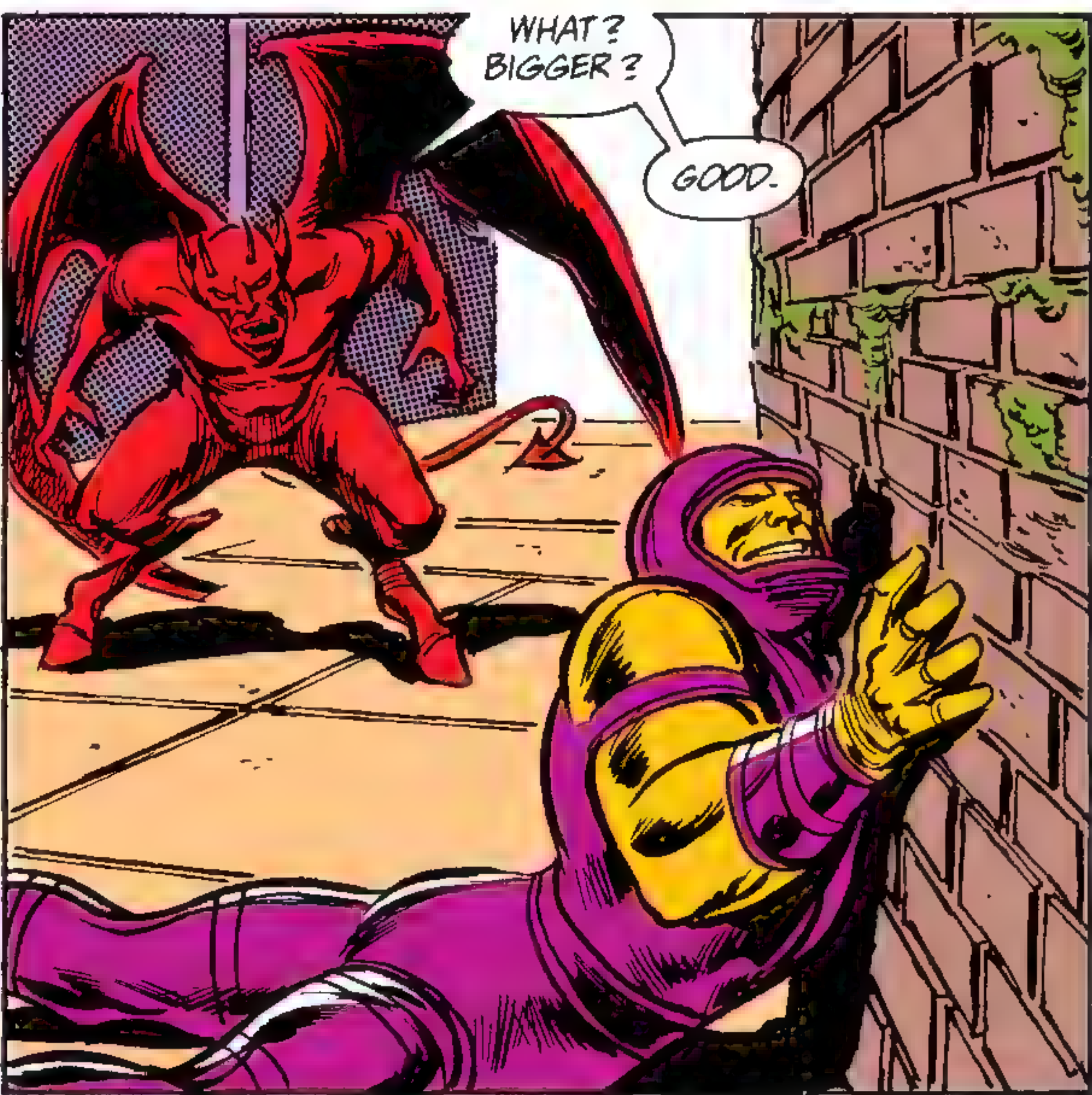
DESIST! I MUST--
~MMMPPH~



DON'T RUN AWAY, LITTLE FELLOW!

WE WANT TO PLAY!

SWACK



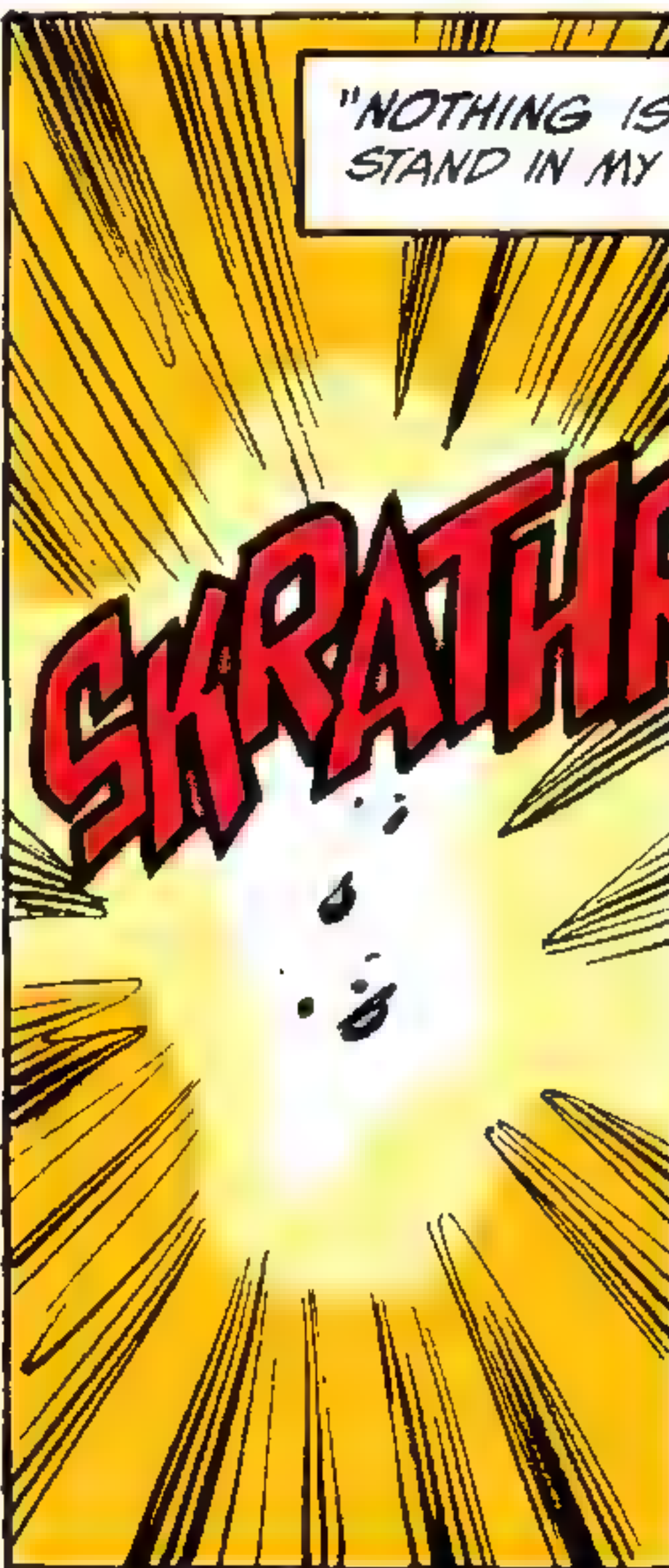
WHAT? BIGGER?

GOOD.



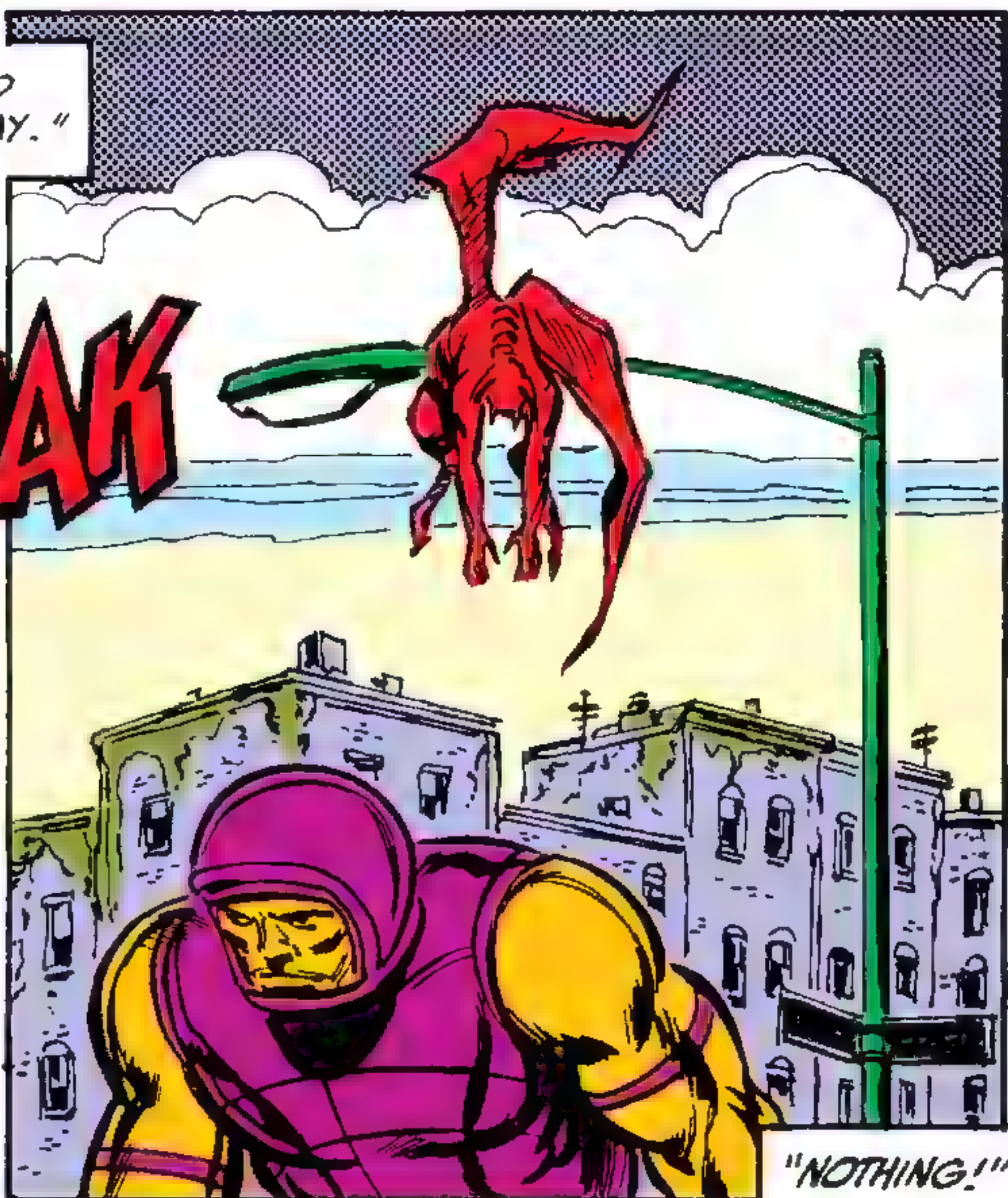
NOW WHEN I TEAR OUT YOUR HEART, THERE WILL BE SOMETHING LARGE ENOUGH TO FIND!

I HAVE MY MASTER'S ORDERS.



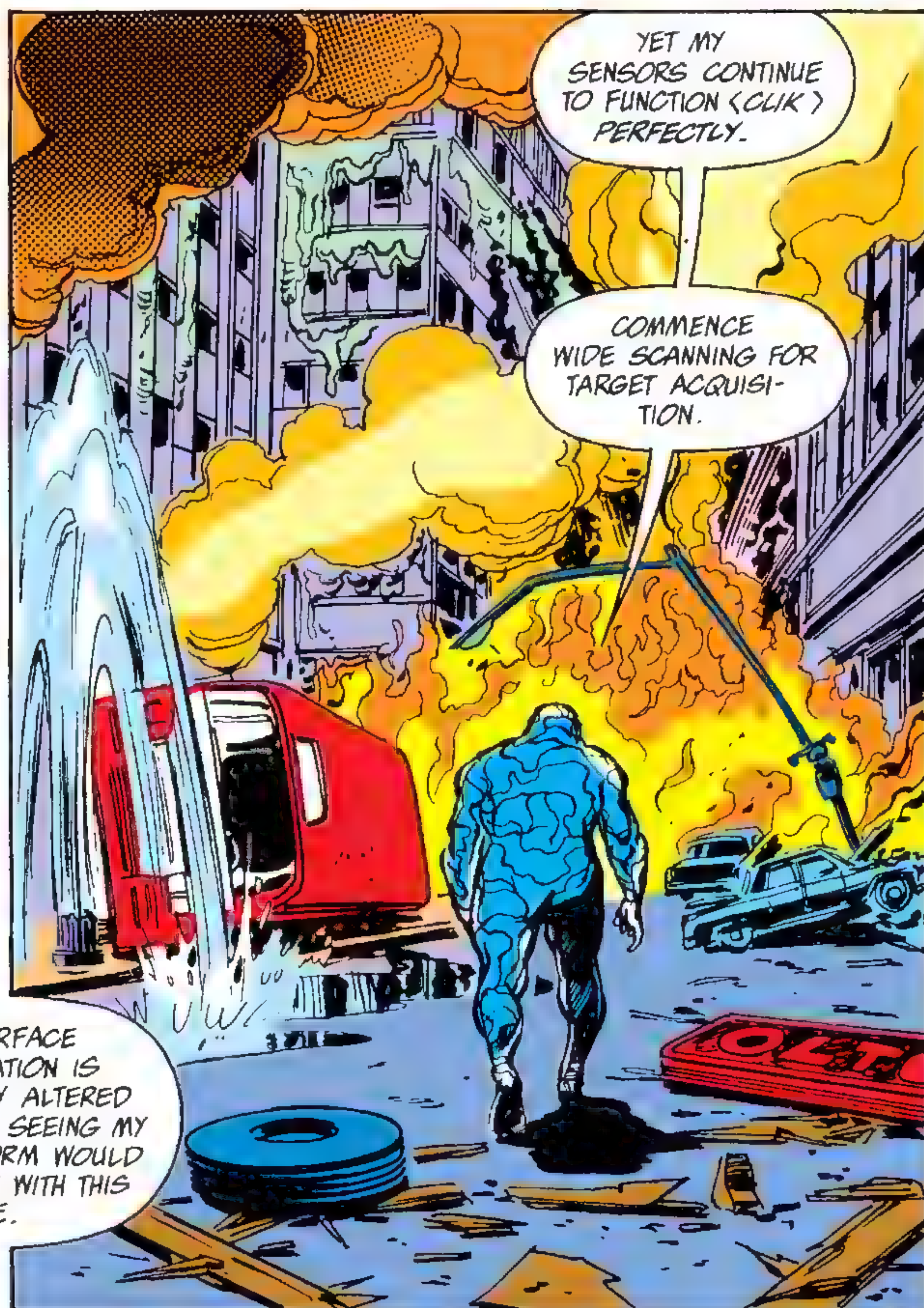
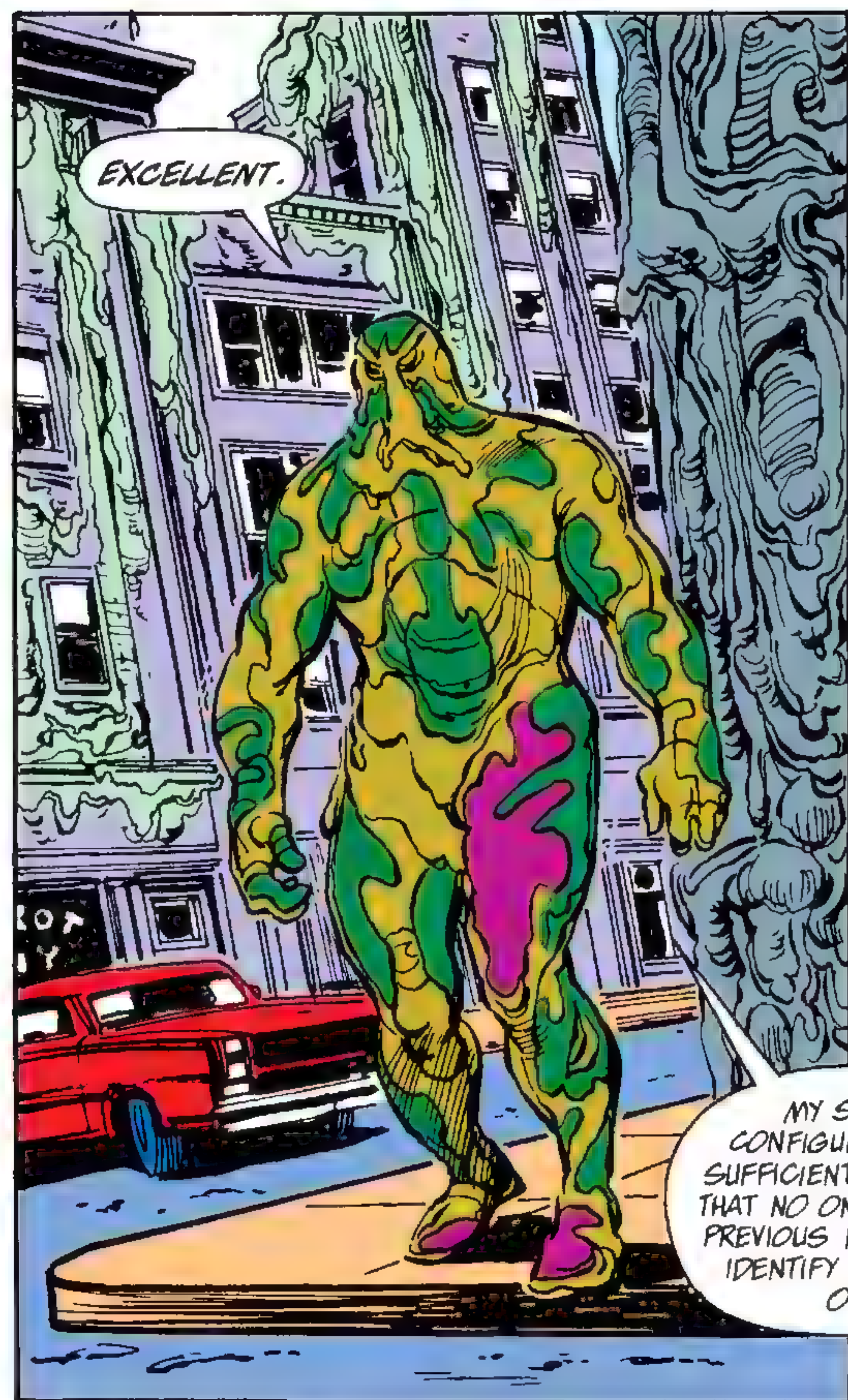
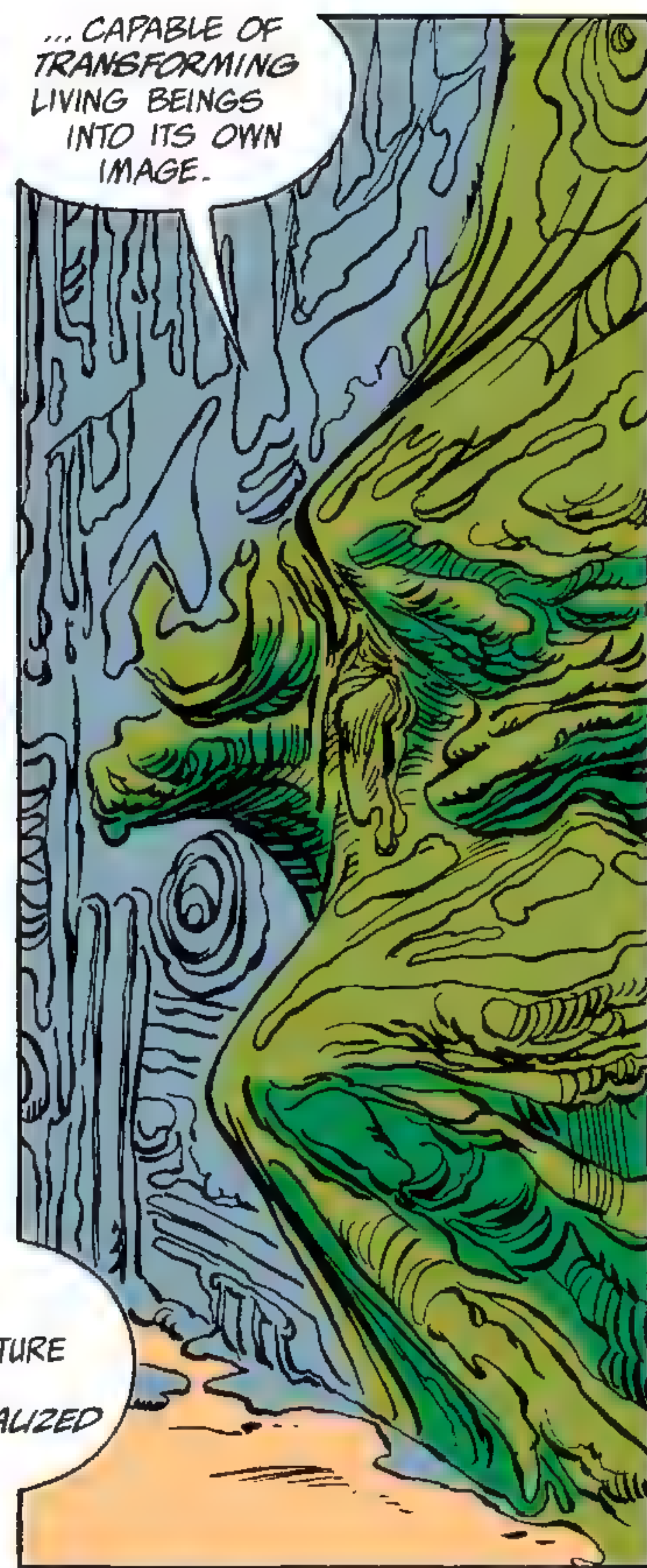
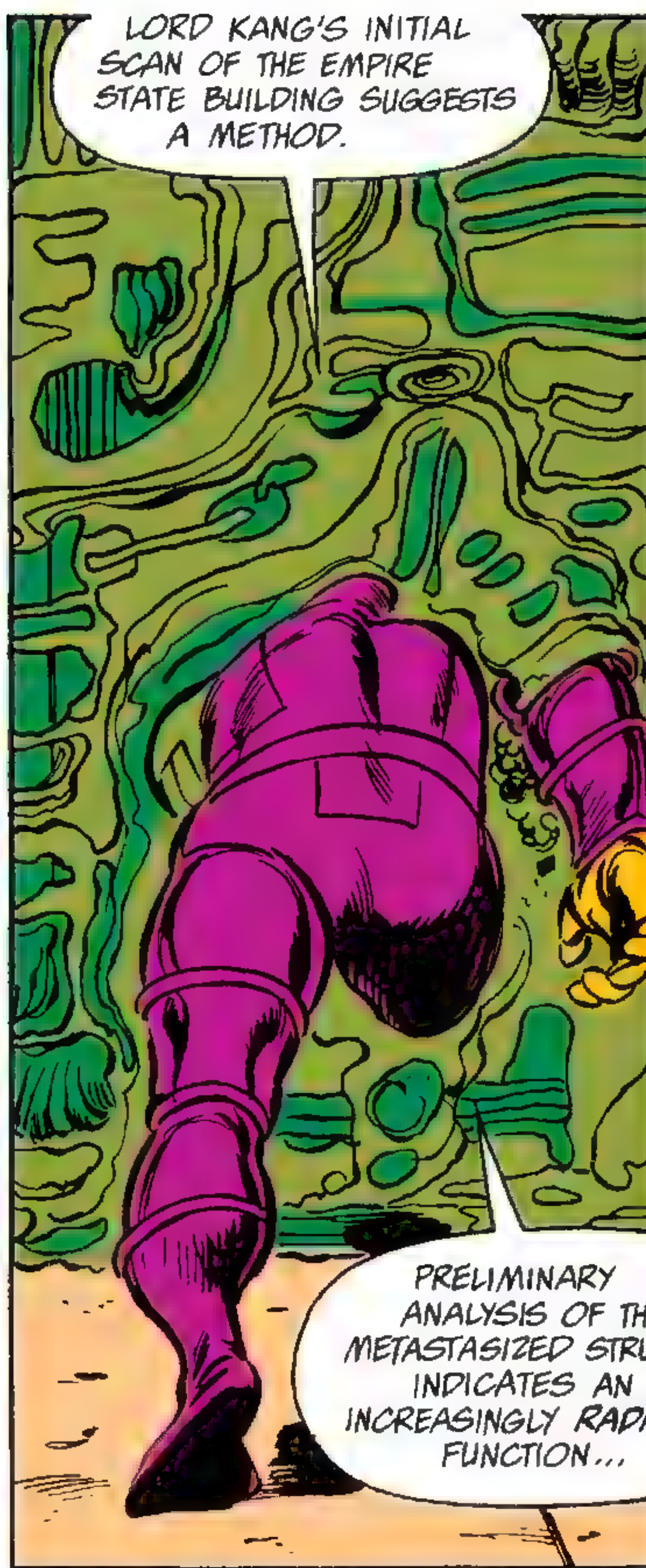
"NOTHING IS TO STAND IN MY WAY."

SKRATHRAK



"NOTHING!"

AND THOUGH THE CITY IS SCREAMING,
NOTHING DOES.



MEANWHILE, AT THE SOUTHERN TIP OF MANHATTAN,
HIGH ABOVE GROUND LEVEL...

...AT THE TOP OF
THE WORLD
TRADE CENTER...

MY LORD!
YOU HAVE
HIM!

KLYTUS!
QUICKLY! HIS
ARMOR MUST BE
REMOVED AND
THE DARK CHILDE
SECURED!

THE POWER
WITHIN HIM IS
EVEN GREATER THAN
I SUSPECTED!

ALREADY HE BEGINS
TO STIR WITHIN AND
SHOULD HE CHANCE
TO AWAKE BEFORE
WE CAN HARNESS
HIM...

...WELL, WE
HAVE ENOUGH TO
OCCUPY OUR TIME
ALREADY!

MOVE!

YES,
MASTER!

THIS ARMOR IS
WELL MADE. BUT
IT CANNOT
LONG RESIST
THE CUTTING
ENERGIES OF
LIMBO.

CAREFUL!
WE DON'T WANT TO
DAMAGE HIM!

MASTER,
HURRY!

HIS
BLOOD
QUICKENS!

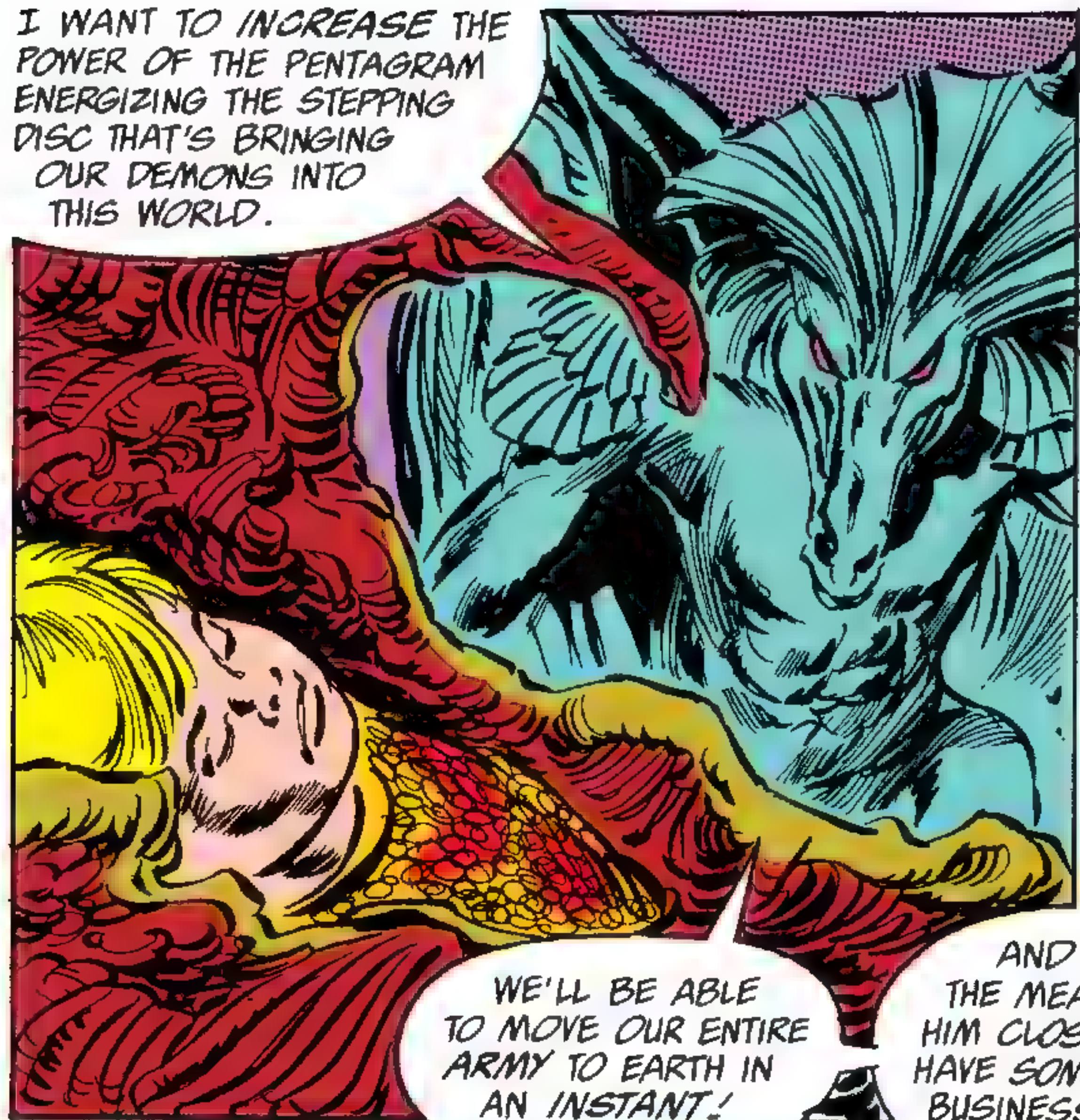
LET
ME HAVE
HIM!

WELL DONE! STILL HE
SLEEPS AND NOW
SHALL SLEEP FOR-
EVER, A TOOL AT
OUR COMMAND.

THE WALLS
WILL DRAW
OFF HIS
POWER!

HE SHALL BE MUCH MORE
THAN MERELY A PAWN TO
BE USED AGAINST THE
GOBLIN QUEEN.

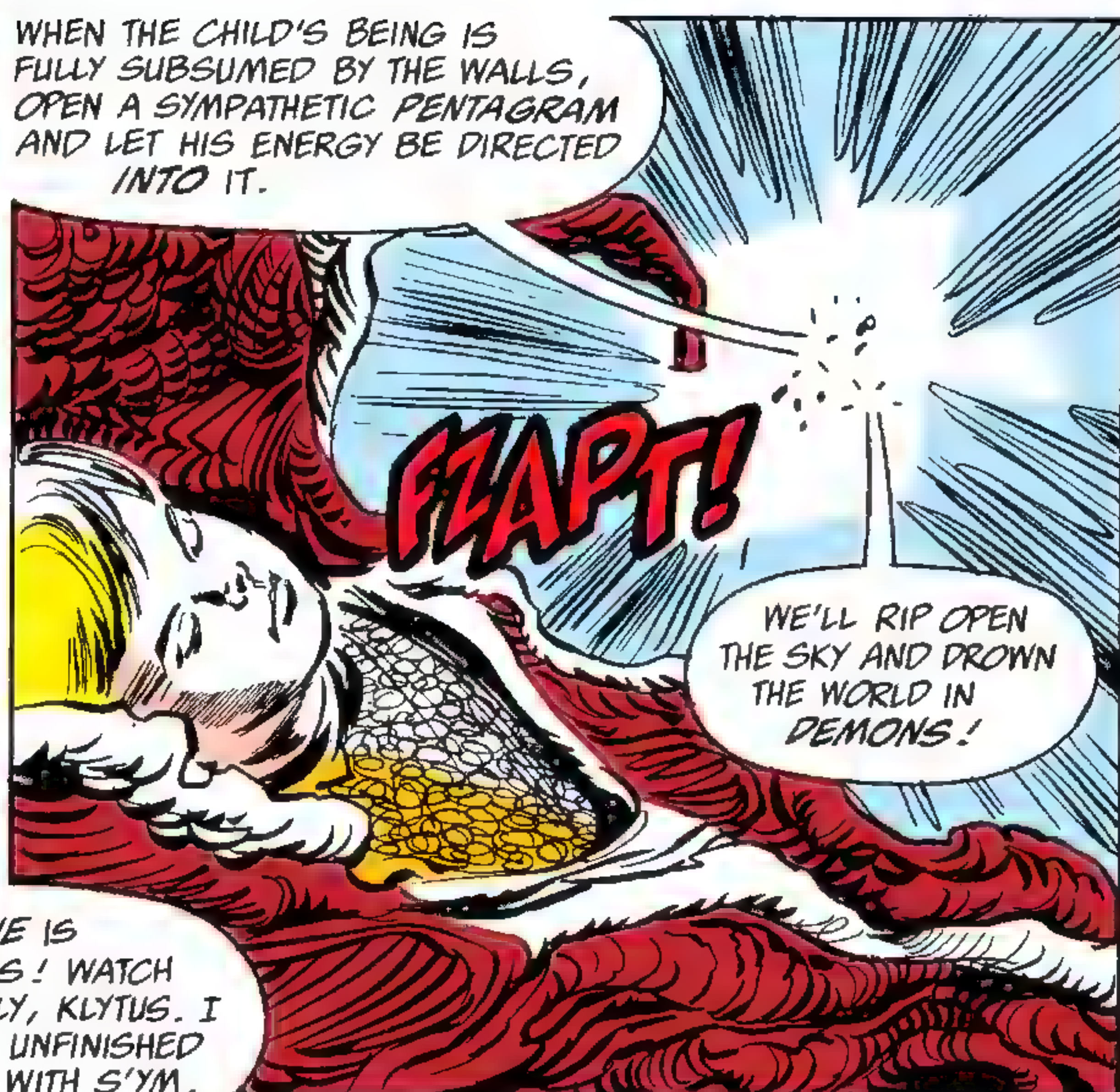
I WANT TO INCREASE THE POWER OF THE PENTAGRAM ENERGIZING THE STEPPING DISC THAT'S BRINGING OUR DEMONS INTO THIS WORLD.



WE'LL BE ABLE TO MOVE OUR ENTIRE ARMY TO EARTH IN AN INSTANT!

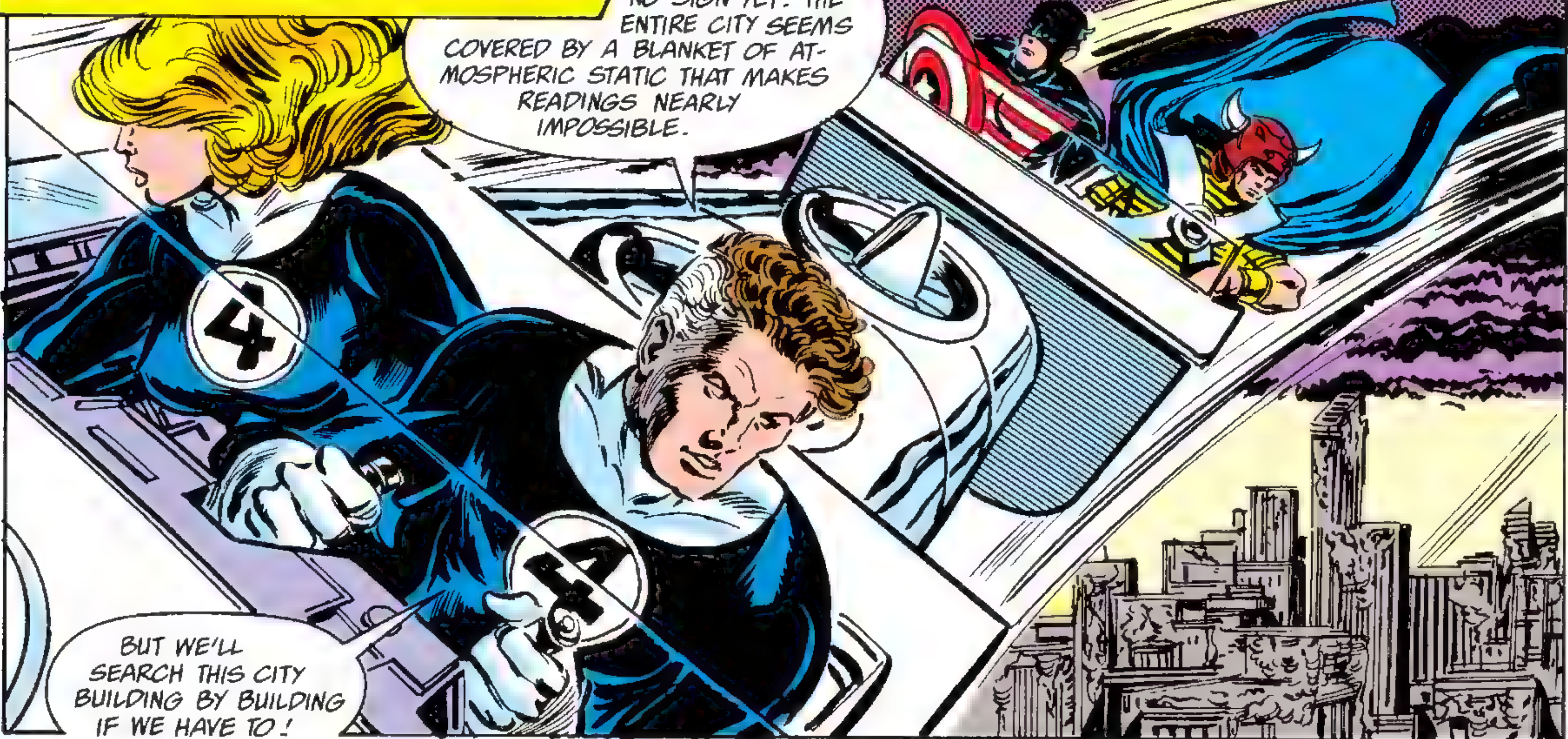
AND HE IS THE MEANS! WATCH HIM CLOSELY, KLYTUS. I HAVE SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS WITH S'YM.

WHEN THE CHILD'S BEING IS FULLY SUBSUMED BY THE WALLS, OPEN A SYMPATHETIC PENTAGRAM AND LET HIS ENERGY BE DIRECTED INTO IT.



WE'LL RIP OPEN THE SKY AND DROWN THE WORLD IN DEMONS!

AND FURTHER NORTH, ABOVE MANHATTAN...



NO SIGN YET. THE ENTIRE CITY SEEMS COVERED BY A BLANKET OF ATMOSPHERIC STATIC THAT MAKES READINGS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE.

BUT WE'LL SEARCH THIS CITY BUILDING BY BUILDING IF WE HAVE TO!



WHAT--?

IT'S HIM! IT HAS TO BE!

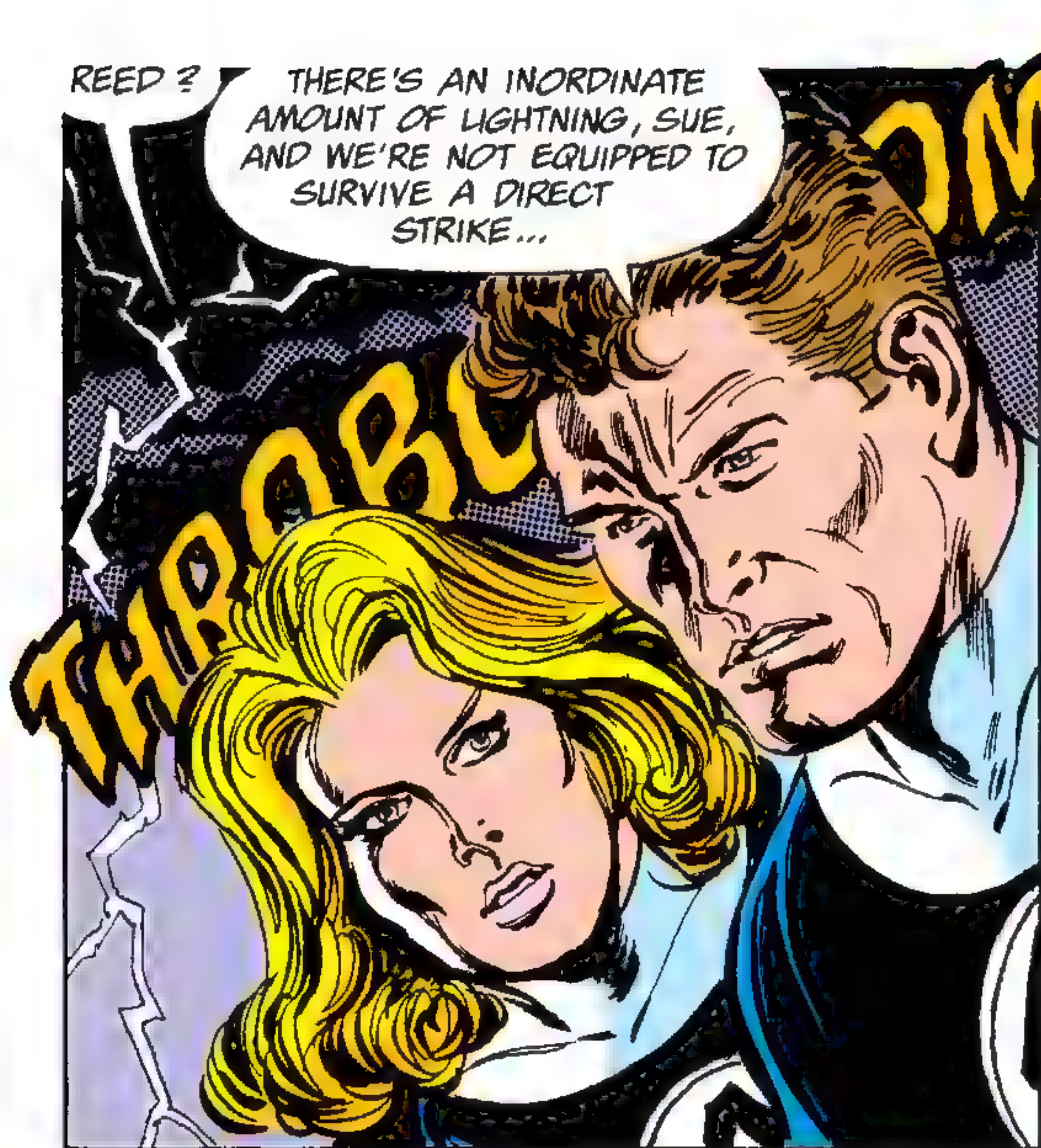
REED! THAT LIGHTNING ON THE WEST SIDE! HEAD FOR IT!



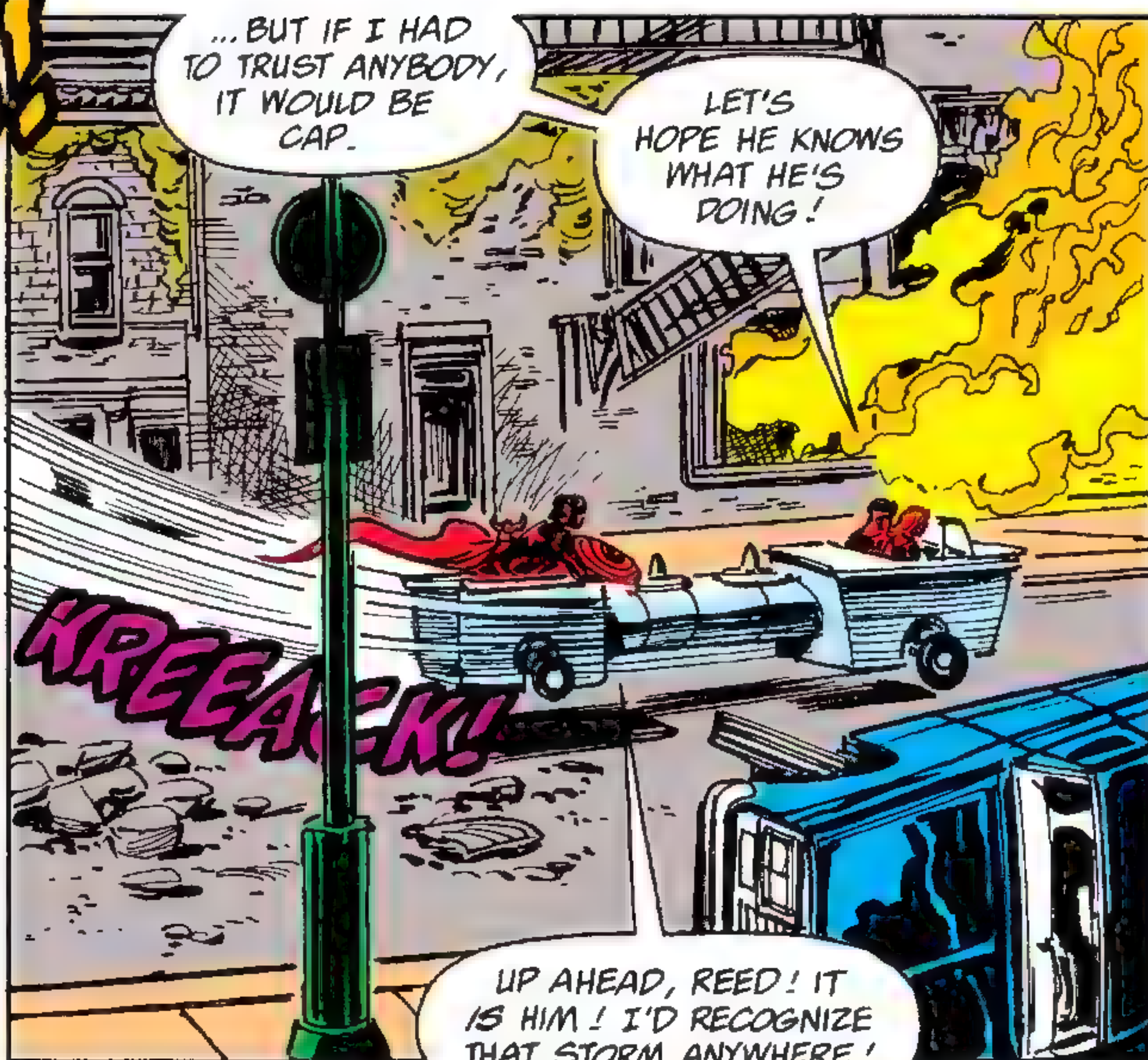
DEAD CENTER, GROUND LEVEL! AND HURRY! UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS, WE'RE ABOUT TO FIND ANOTHER ALLY!

IN A THUNDER STORM?

YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT, MISTER!



REED ?
THERE'S AN INORDINATE
AMOUNT OF LIGHTNING, SUE,
AND WE'RE NOT EQUIPPED TO
SURVIVE A DIRECT
STRIKE...



... BUT IF I HAD
TO TRUST ANYBODY,
IT WOULD BE
CAP.

LET'S
HOPE HE KNOWS
WHAT HE'S
DOING !

UP AHEAD, REED ! IT
IS HIM ! I'D RECOGNIZE
THAT STORM ANYWHERE !

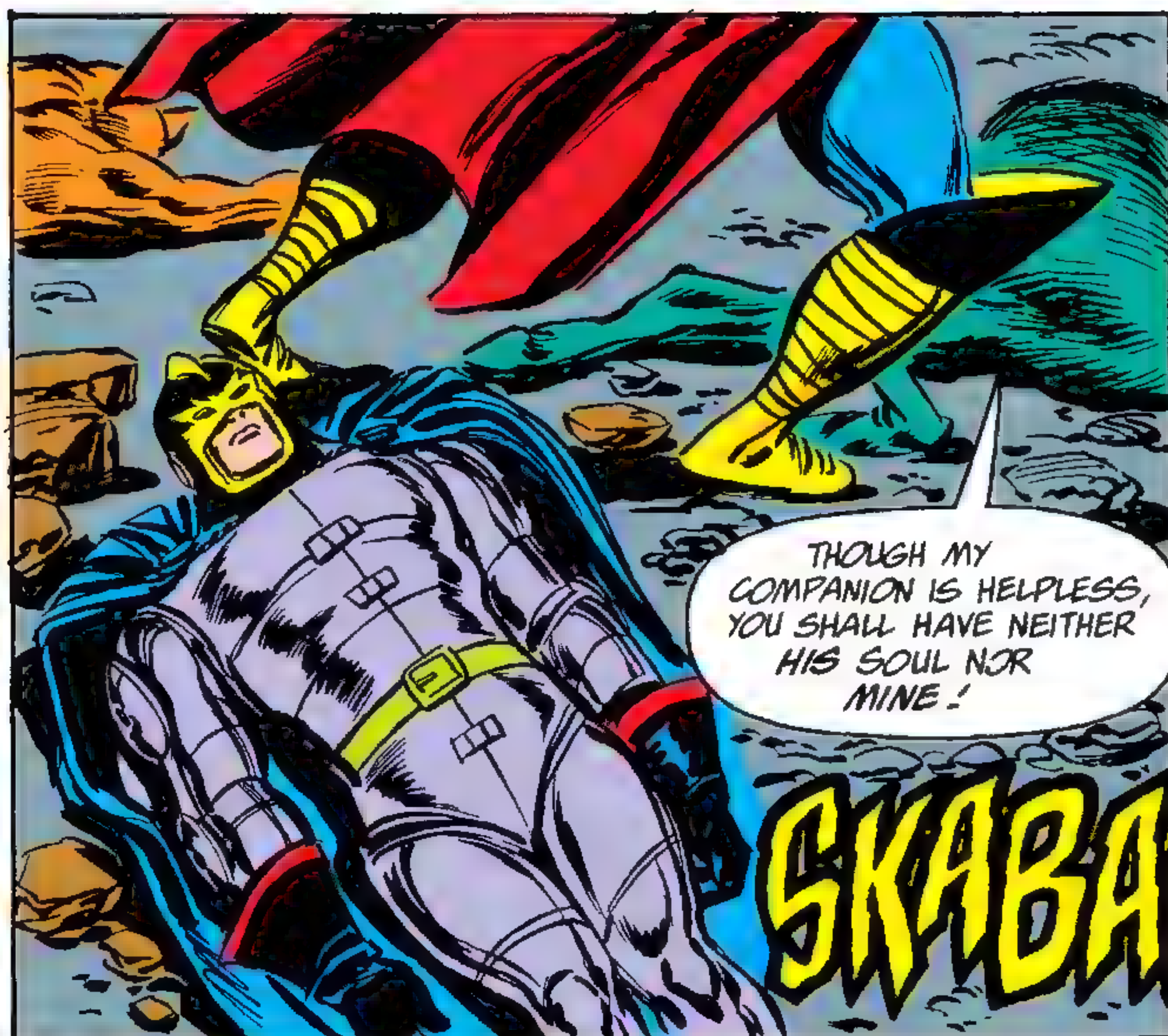
HAVE AT THEE, DEMONS !
THOR IS NO TOOTHLESS DOG
WHOM YOU MIGHT SLAUGHTER
AT YOUR WHIM !

THE
EARTH AND ALL
WHO INHABIT IT ARE
IN MY CHARGE !

THOUGH THY LEGIONS MAY
BE NUMBERLESS, STILL SHALL
THE SON OF ODIN TRIUMPH !

AND THE BERSERKERS
OF VALHALLA WILL WEEP THAT
THEY WERE NOT HERE TO SHARE
THIS GLORY !





THOUGH MY
COMPANION IS HELPLESS,
YOU SHALL HAVE NEITHER
HIS SOUL NOR
MINE!

SKABALKT!

THAT'S THE BLACK
KNIGHT! WHAT'S
HAPPENED TO
HIM?

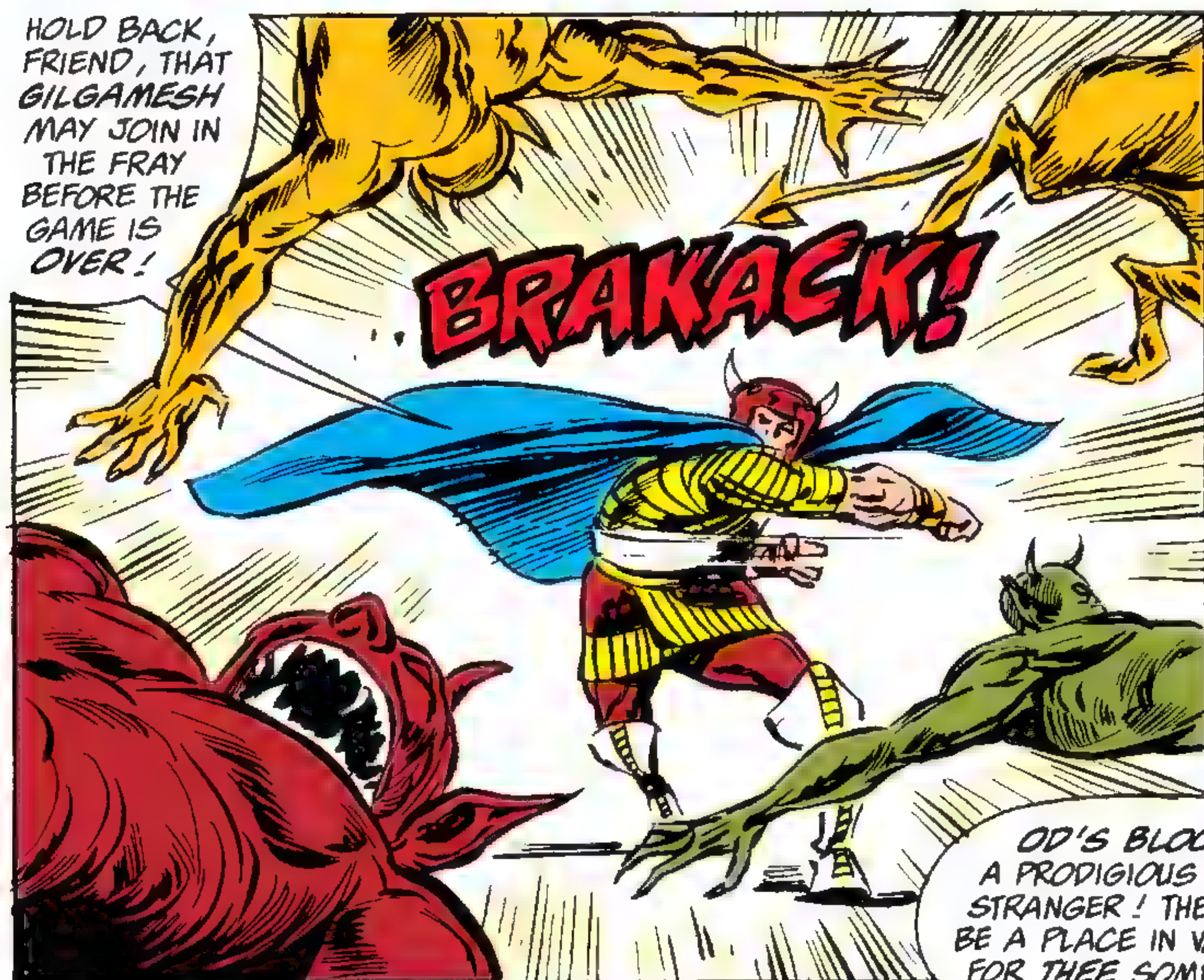
TIME ENOUGH
FOR QUESTIONS
AND
ANSWERS
LATER,
CAPTAIN!



NOW IS
THE TIME FOR
ACTION!

I HAVE
SEEN THE GOD
OF THUNDER
AND HIS NAME
IS BATTLE!

HOLD BACK,
FRIEND, THAT
GILGAMESH
MAY JOIN IN
THE FRAY
BEFORE THE
GAME IS
OVER!



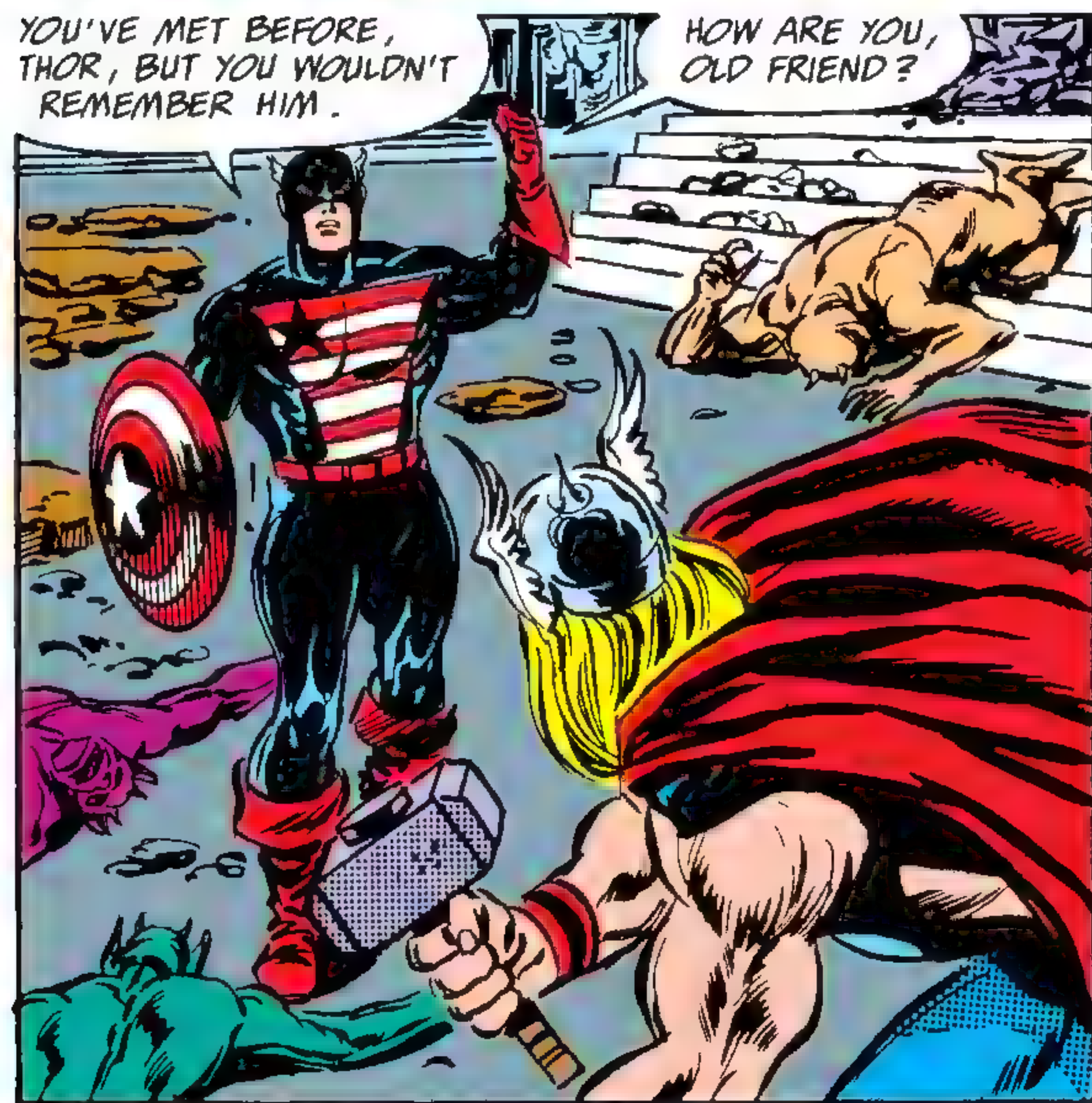
BRAKACK!

OD'S BLOOD!
A PRODIGIOUS BLOW,
STRANGER! THERE MAY
BE A PLACE IN VALHALLA
FOR THEE SOMEDAY!



HOW CAN SUCH A WARRIOR
AS GILGAMESH LIVE AND
NOT BE KNOWN TO THOR?

YOU'VE MET BEFORE,
THOR, BUT YOU WOULDN'T
REMEMBER HIM.



HOW ARE YOU,
OLD FRIEND?

WELL MET, CAPTAIN. I AM ONLY
JUST RETURNED TO EARTH* TO
FIND THESE CREATURES EVERY-
WHERE! WHAT CHANCES?



IT'S A LONG STORY,
THOR, SO I'LL
GIVE YOU THE
SHORT VERSION.

WE'VE GOT A LOT
ON OUR PLATE, NOT THE
LEAST OF WHICH IS A
MISSING CHILD.

* AS SEEN IN THOR # 400.

AND ONE SHORT
VERSION LATER...

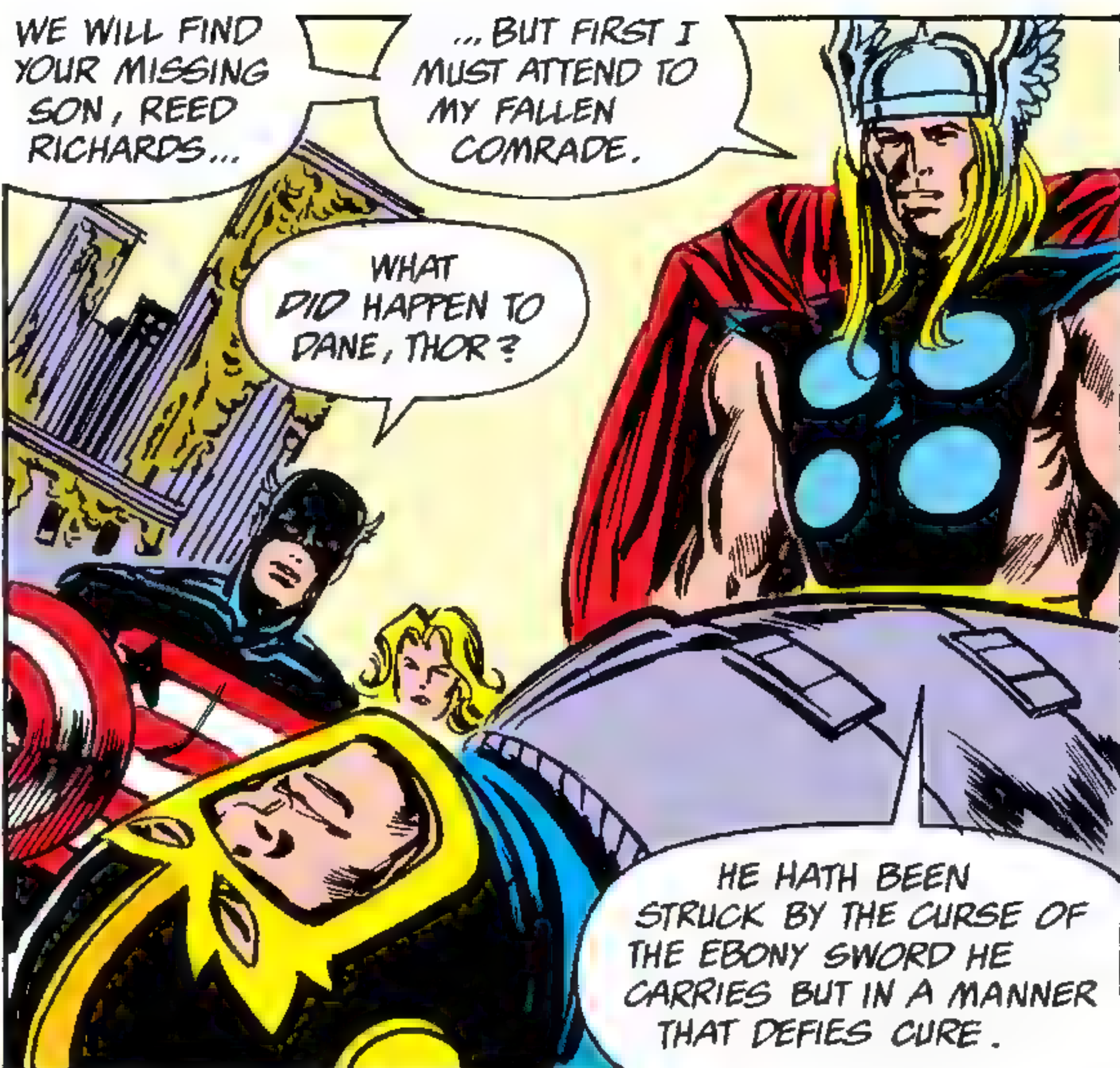
AND SO MY
ATTEMPTS TO
TRACK
FRANKLIN'S ENERGY SIGNA-
TURE HAVE FAILED SO FAR.



THE CAPTAIN
WAS RIGHT. THERE IS
MUCH TO BE DONE.

WE WILL FIND
YOUR MISSING
SON, REED
RICHARDS...

...BUT FIRST I
MUST ATTEND TO
MY FALLEN
COMRADE.



WHAT
DID HAPPEN TO
DANE, THOR?

HE HATH BEEN
STRUCK BY THE CURSE OF
THE EBONY SWORD HE
CARRIES BUT IN A MANNER
THAT DEFIES CURE.

IT IS AS THOUGH
HE HAS BECOME
THE BLADE.

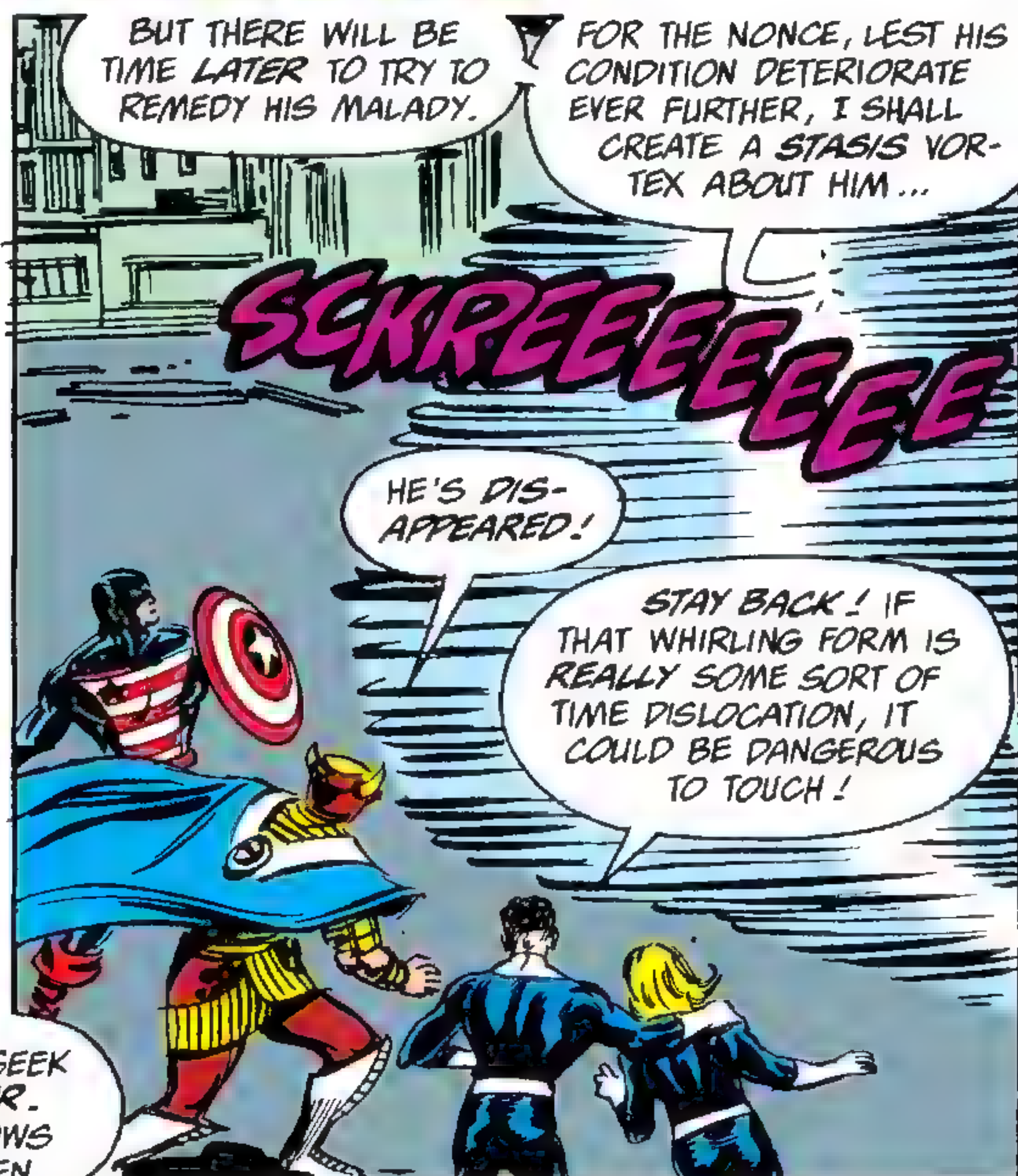


I KNOW NOT
WHETHER HE IS
EVEN CONSCIOUS
WITHIN HIS
SHELL.

MAYHAP I MUST SEEK
OUT THE HELP OF DR.
STRANGE, WHO KNOWS
MUCH THAT IS HIDDEN.

BUT THERE WILL BE
TIME LATER TO TRY TO
REMEDY HIS MALADY.

FOR THE NONCE, LEST HIS
CONDITION DETERIORATE
EVER FURTHER, I SHALL
CREATE A STASIS VOR-
TEX ABOUT HIM...



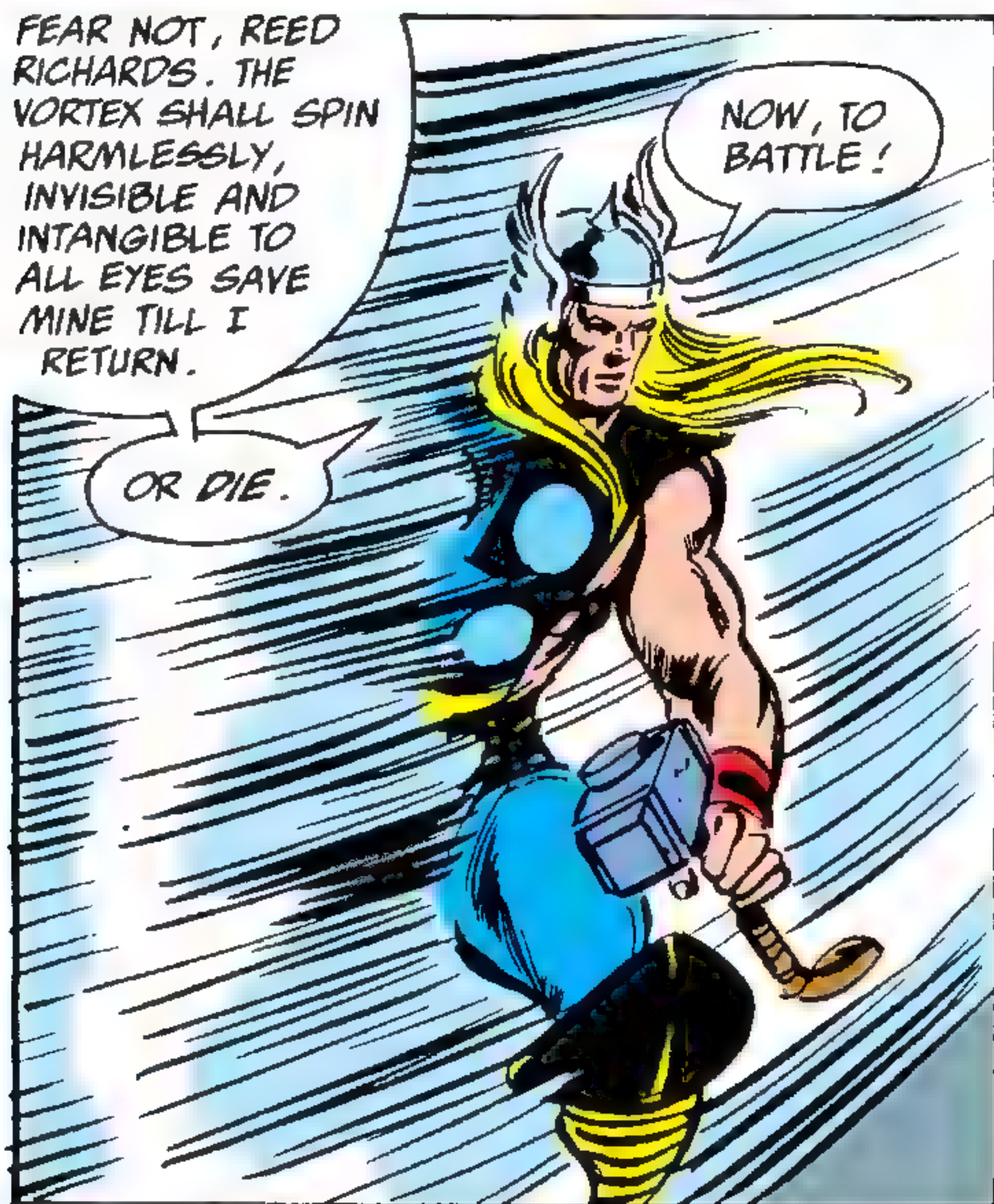
SKREEEEEEEE

HE'S DIS-
APPEARED!

STAY BACK! IF
THAT WHIRLING FORM IS
REALLY SOME SORT OF
TIME DISLOCATION, IT
COULD BE DANGEROUS
TO TOUCH!

FEAR NOT, REED
RICHARDS. THE
VORTEX SHALL SPIN
HARMLESSLY,
INVISIBLE AND
INTANGIBLE TO
ALL EYES SAVE
MINE TILL I
RETURN.

OR DIE.

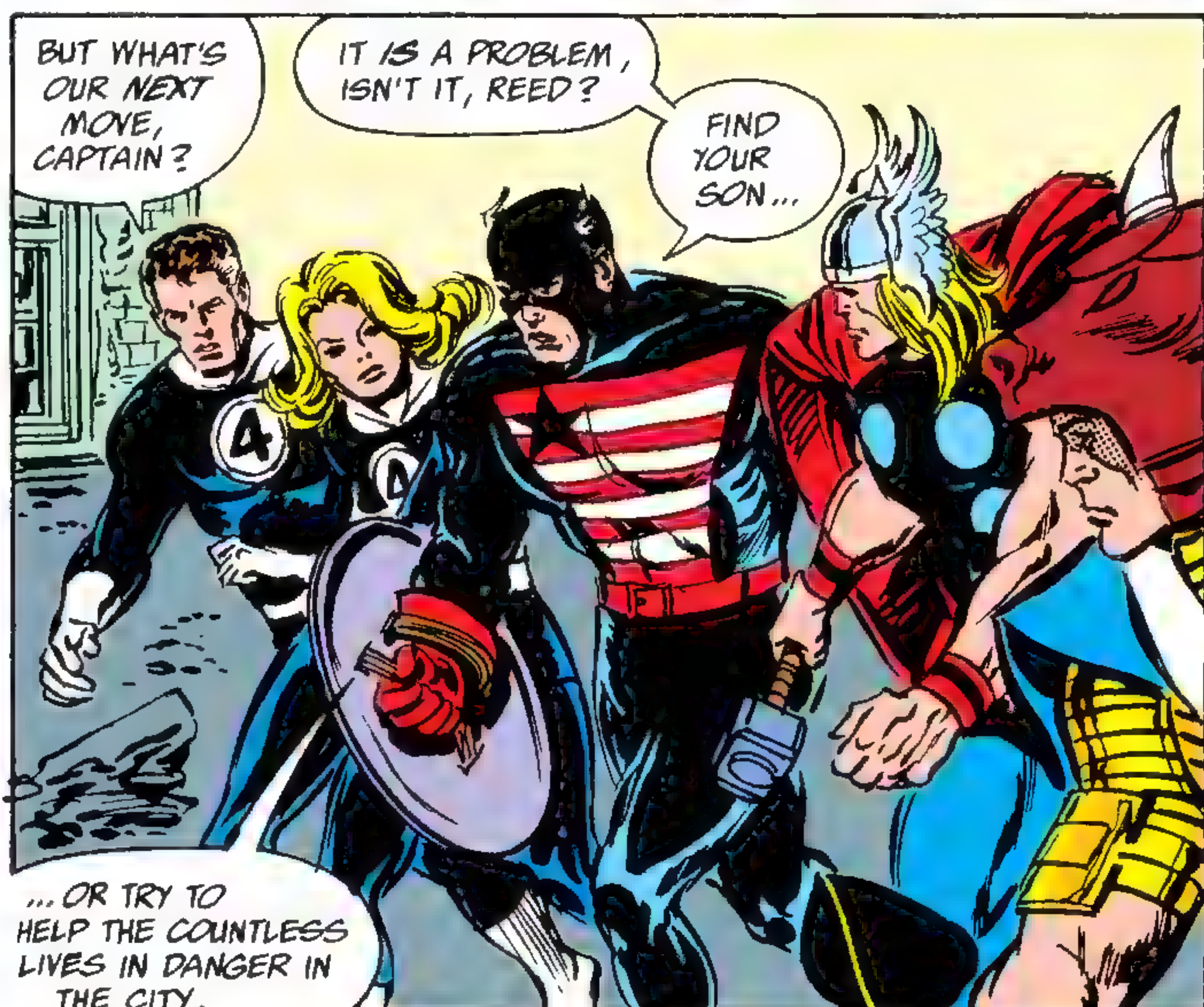


NOW, TO
BATTLE!

BUT WHAT'S
OUR NEXT
MOVE,
CAPTAIN?

IT IS A PROBLEM,
ISN'T IT, REED?

FIND
YOUR
SON...



...OR TRY TO
HELP THE COUNTLESS
LIVES IN DANGER IN
THE CITY.

I THINK WE MUST SPLIT UP, CAPTAIN.

WE CAN'T ASK THE THREE OF YOU TO AID US IN FINDING FRANKLIN WHILE THE CITY IS UNDER SIEGE.

BUT WE CAN'T ABANDON THE SEARCH OURSELVES.

TAKE THE AIR CAR TO HELP YOU SEEK OUT THE SOURCE OF THE DEMONS.

TRACKING LOCK. (CLIK) TARGET ACQUISITION!

I'VE GOT A PORTABLE ENERGY ANALYZER TO HELP US LOCATE FRANKLIN.

WHOA, REED. SELF SACRIFICE IS OKAY, BUT LET'S THINK CLEARLY.

BETWEEN THOR AND GILGAMESH HERE, WE'VE ALREADY GOT FLYING CAPABILITY. YOU TAKE THE AIR CAR.

I'LL HITCH. NO PROBLEM.

THE BEING CALLED THOR IS PRESENT. (CLIK) HE HAS KNOWN ME IN THE PAST.

VOICE REGISTER ADJUSTMENT (CLIK-CLIK) TO DISGUISE ID ENTIRELY.

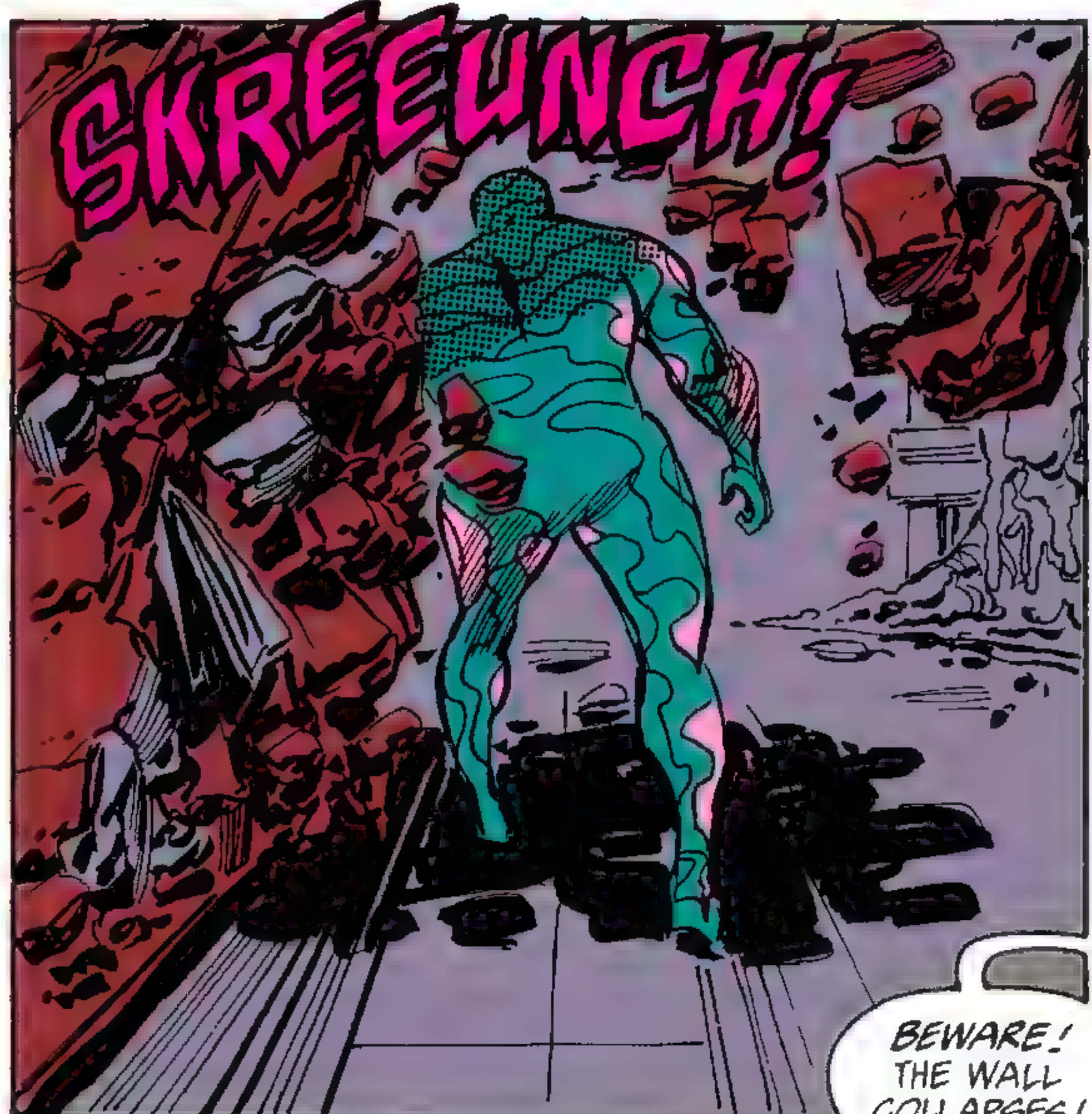
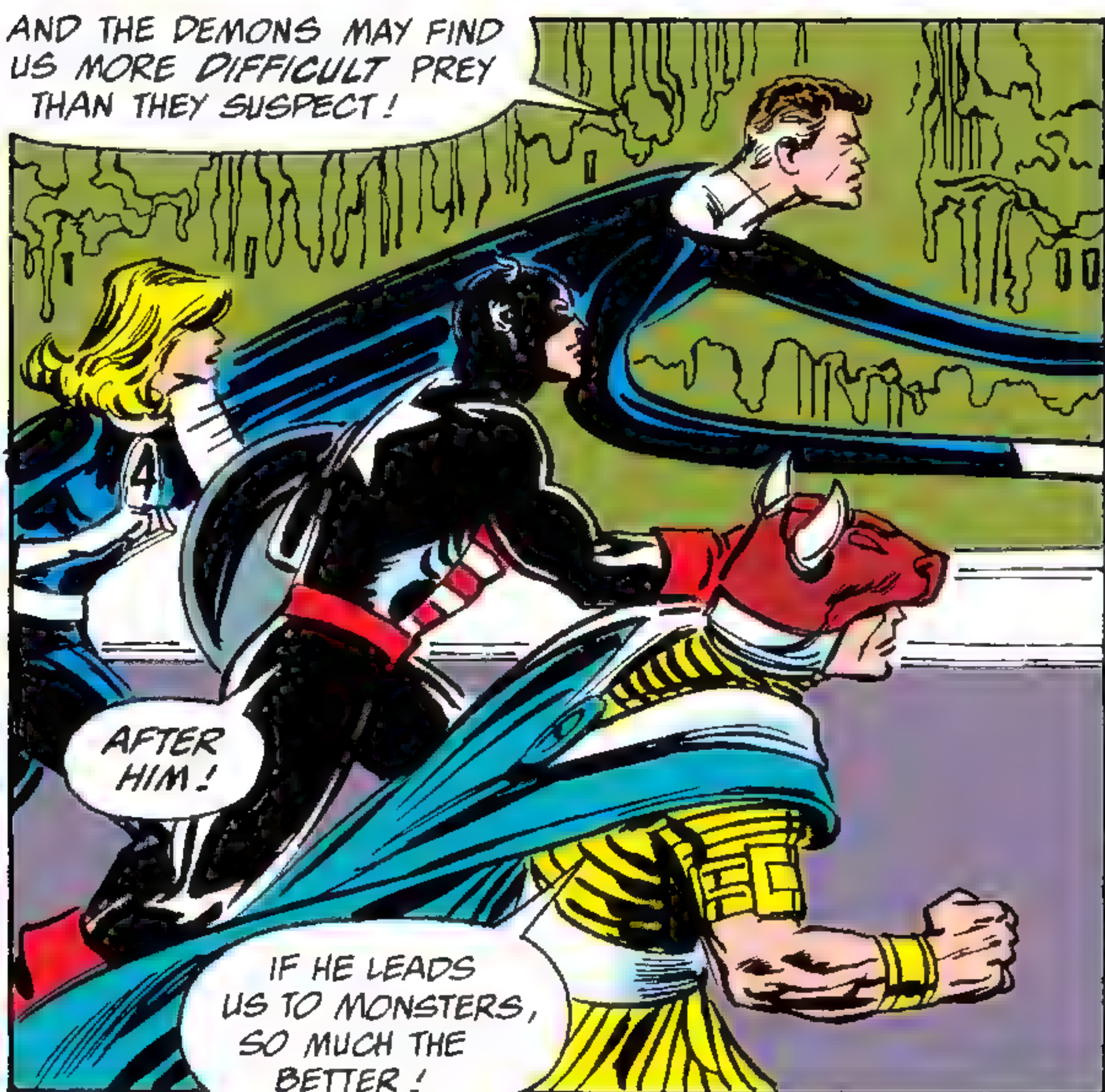
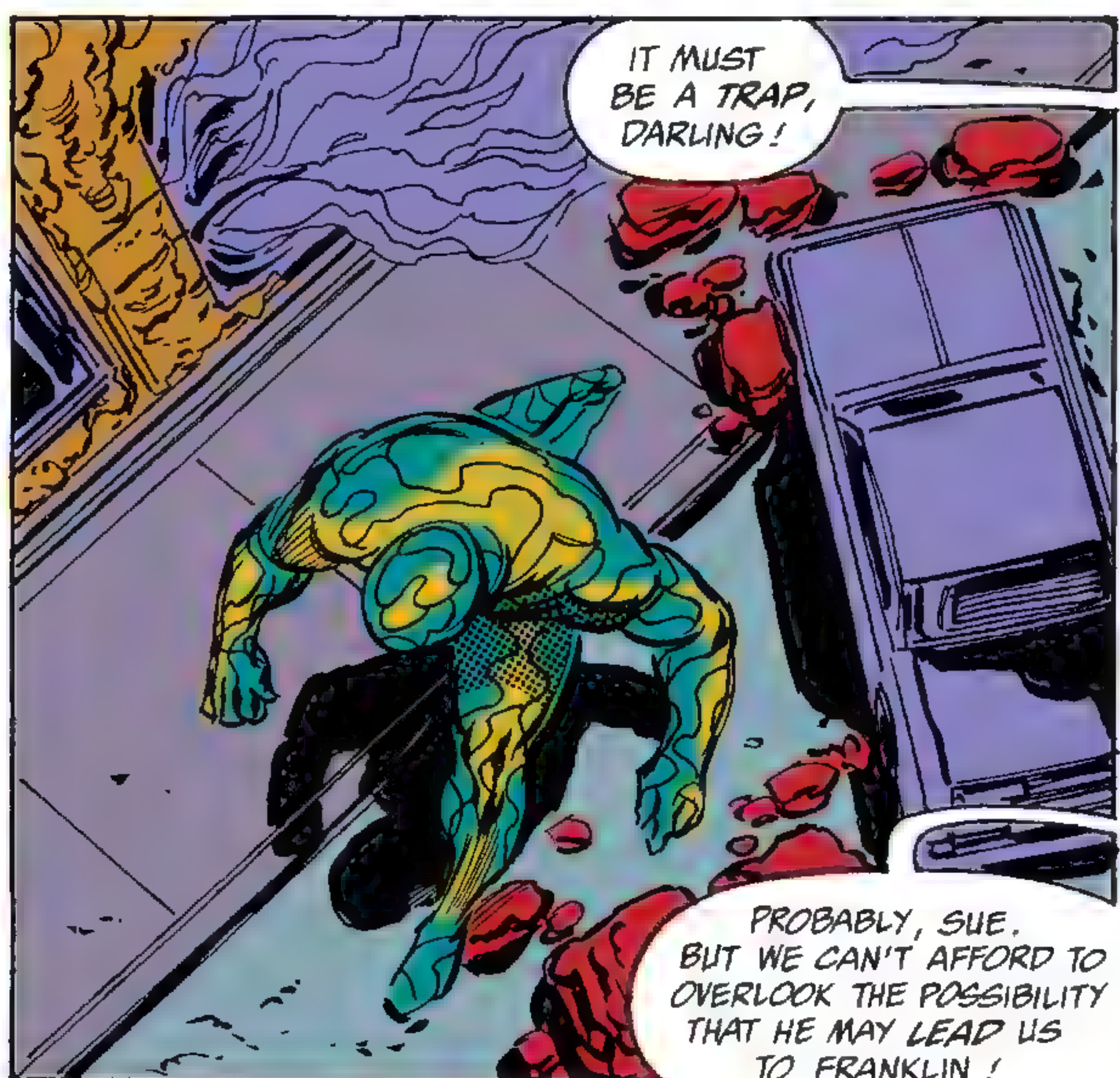
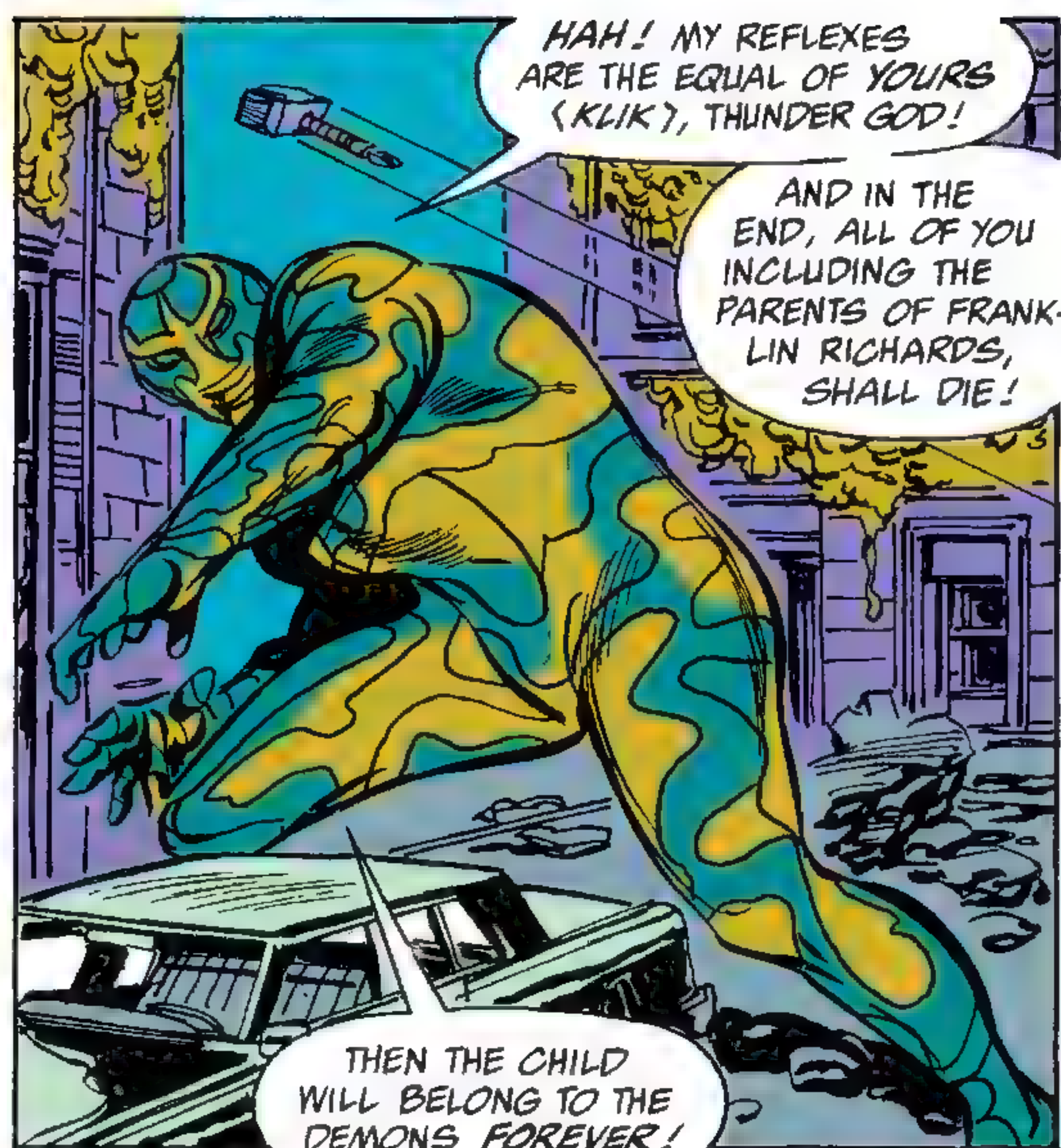
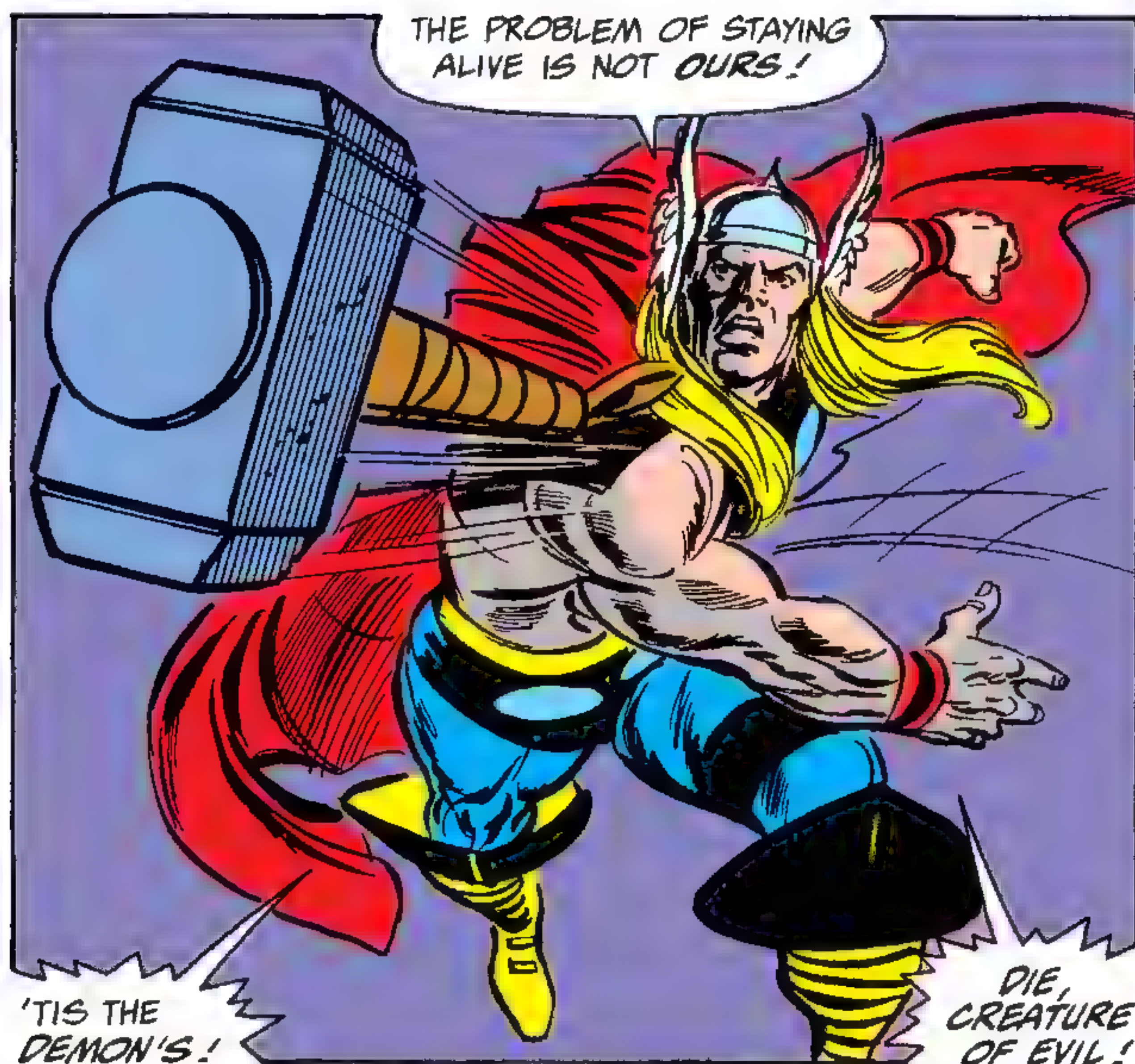
ACCORDING TO THE MASTER'S PLAN, I MUST ATTRACT THEIR ATTENTION.

GREAT ZURAS! DUCK!

SMACKSH

THE DEMONS JUST INCREASED THE STAKES!

OUR IMMEDIATE PROBLEM COULD BE SIMPLY STAYING ALIVE!



FLY! QUICKLY!
THOR SHALL HOLD
THE WALL!



SUSAN?

I'VE BEEN
AROUND,
CAPTAIN!

GET OUT OF HERE
WHILE MY FORCE FIELD
DEFLECTS THE FLYING DEBRIS!
YOU TOO, THOR!

DON'T WORRY, CAP.
MY FORCE FIELD
CAN SHIELD ALL
OF US.

BUT IF WE KEEP HAVING
TO DUCK WHILE HE PLAYS
HIDE AND SEEK BY KNOCK-
ING OVER BUILDINGS, HE
MAY SHAKE US!

HE'S HEADING
SOUTH!



NO TIME TO
RETURN TO THE AIR CAR!
THOR! GILGAMESH!
WE NEED AN AIRLIFT!
QUICKLY!



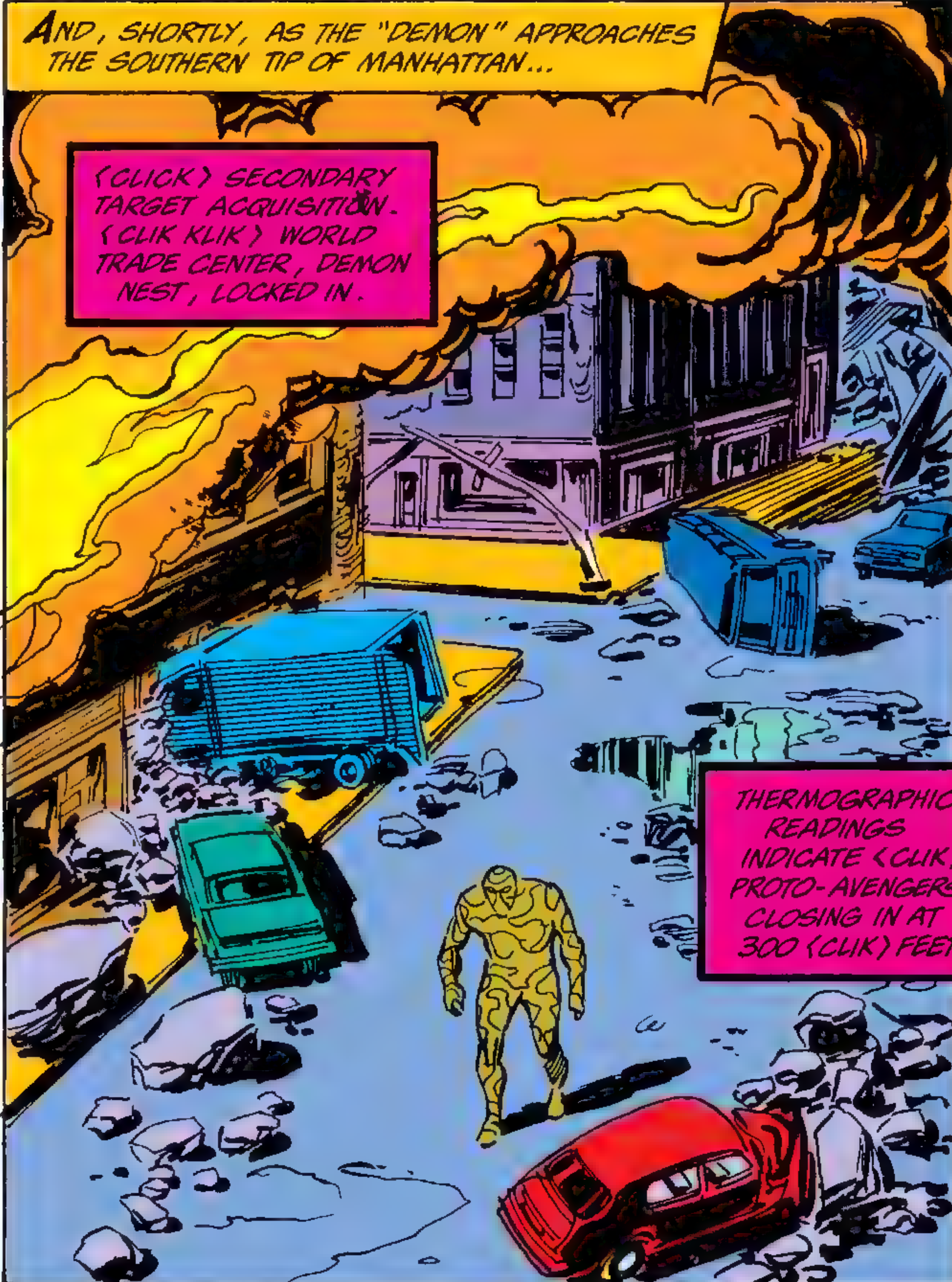
PLAKHOOAUM

ANOTHER
BUILDING? IS HE JUST
PLAYING HARD TO GET OR
DOES HE REALLY WANT
TO LOSE US?

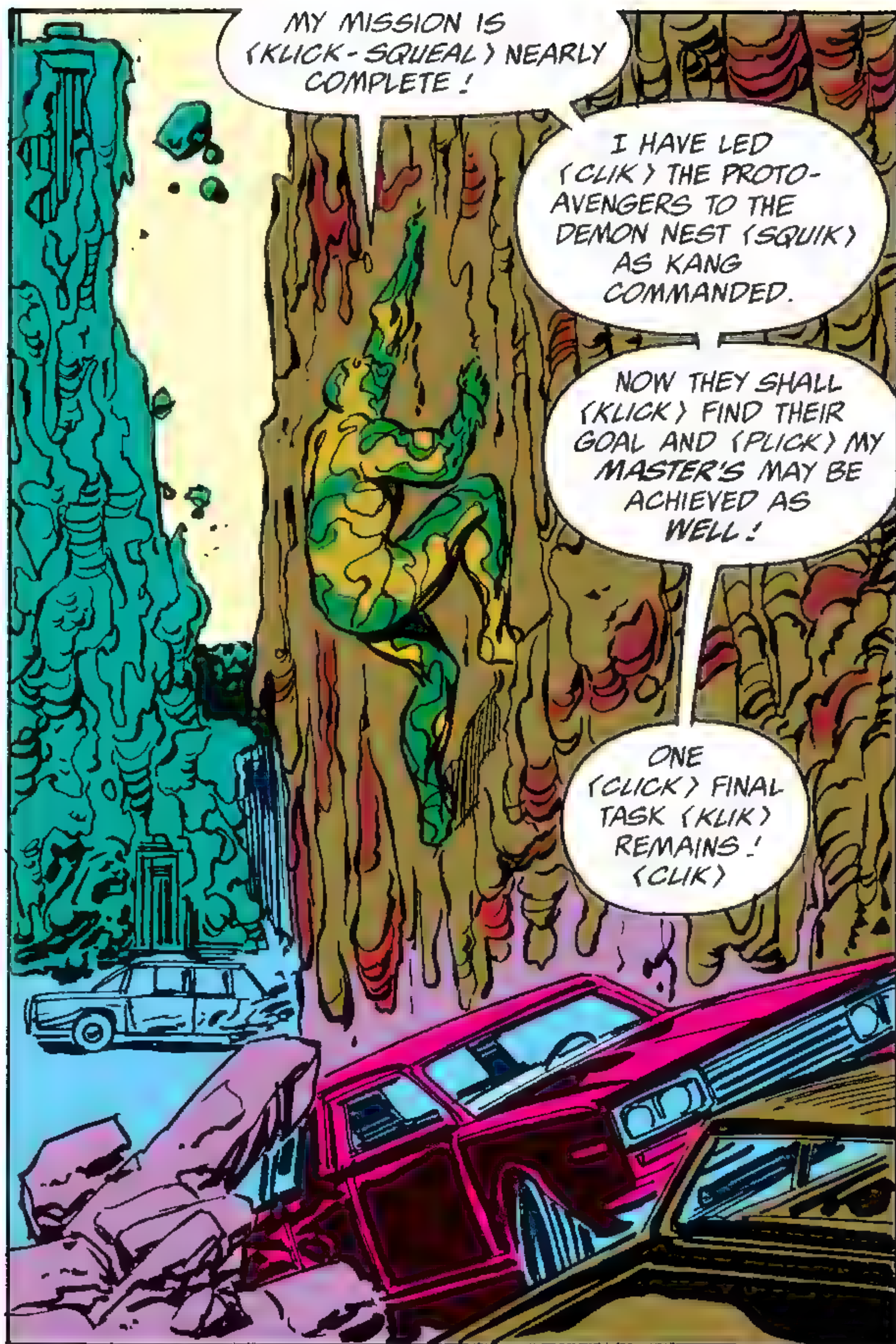
KEEP YOUR
HEADS DOWN!

AND, SHORTLY, AS THE "DEMON" APPROACHES
THE SOUTHERN TIP OF MANHATTAN...

{CLICK} SECONDARY
TARGET ACQUISITION.
{CLIK KLIK} WORLD
TRADE CENTER, DEMON
NEST, LOCKED IN.



THERMOGRAPHIC
READINGS
INDICATE {CLIK}
PROTO-AVENGERS
CLOSING IN AT
300 {CLIK} FEET.



MY MISSION IS
(KLUCK-SQUEAL) NEARLY
COMPLETE!

I HAVE LED
(CLIK) THE PROTO-
AVENGERS TO THE
DEMON NEST (SQUICK)
AS KANG
COMMANDED.

NOW THEY SHALL
(KLUCK) FIND THEIR
GOAL AND (PLICK) MY
MASTER'S MAY BE
ACHIEVED AS
WELL!

ONE
(CLIK) FINAL
TASK (KLUCK)
REMAINS!
(CLIK)



BY THE SWORD OF SURTUR,
THE DEMON DOTH CLIMB THE
SIDE OF THE TOWER
ITSELF!

HE SEEMS TO
BE MAKING FOR THAT...
THING ON TOP OF THE
BUILDING!

'TIS SOME
SORT OF VILE
GROWTH! A
DEMON'S NEST,
I'LL WAGER!



NOW IS HIS
PURPOSE CLEAR!
TO LEAD US HERE
TO OUR DESTRUC-
TION!

COME, CAPTAIN! BEFORE
YON DEMONS CAN ATTACK,
LET THE AVENGERS OF YORE
TAKE THE OFFENSIVE!

WE SHALL
TEACH THEIR OUTRIDER
THE MEANING OF
DANGER!

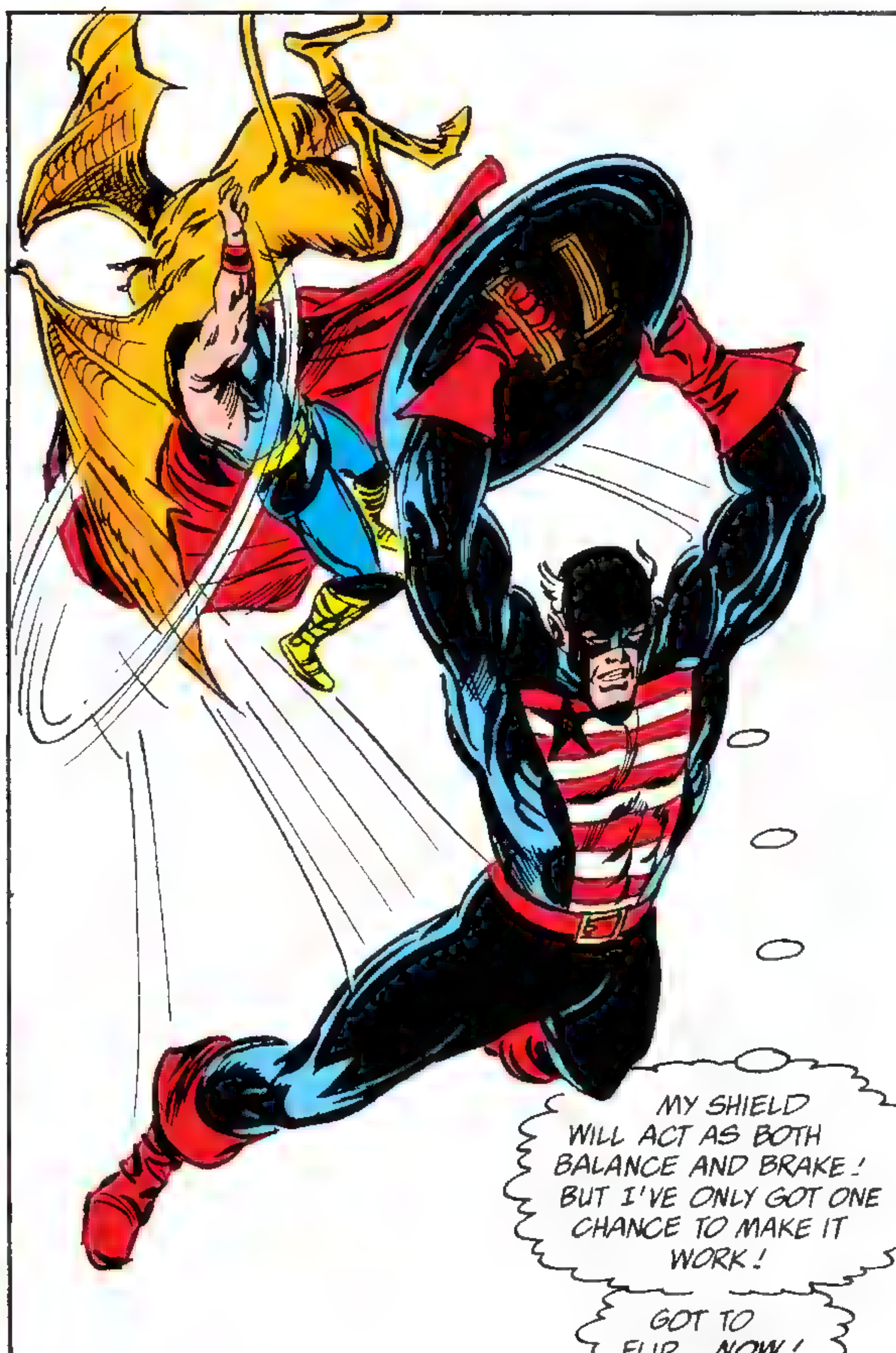
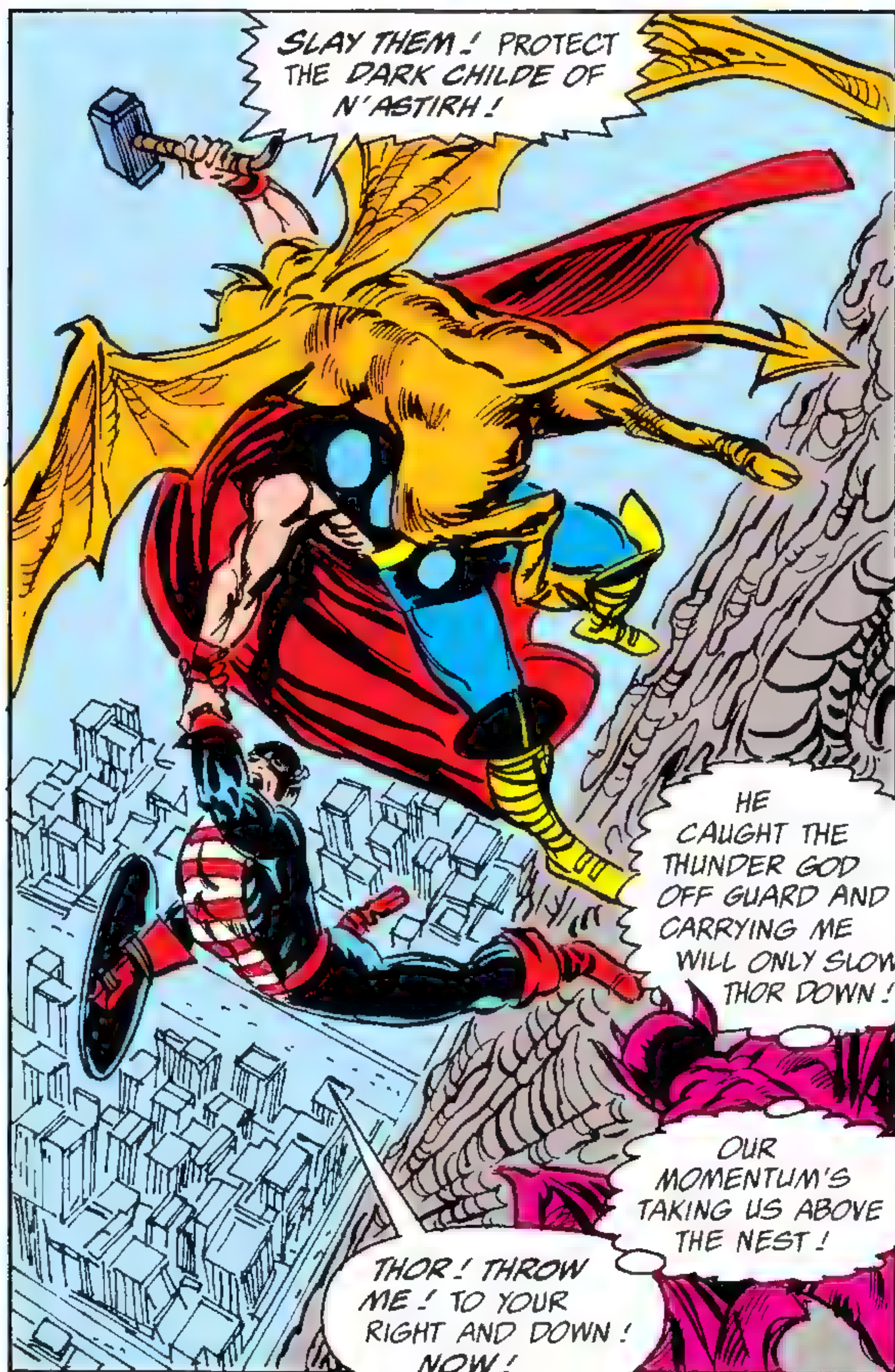
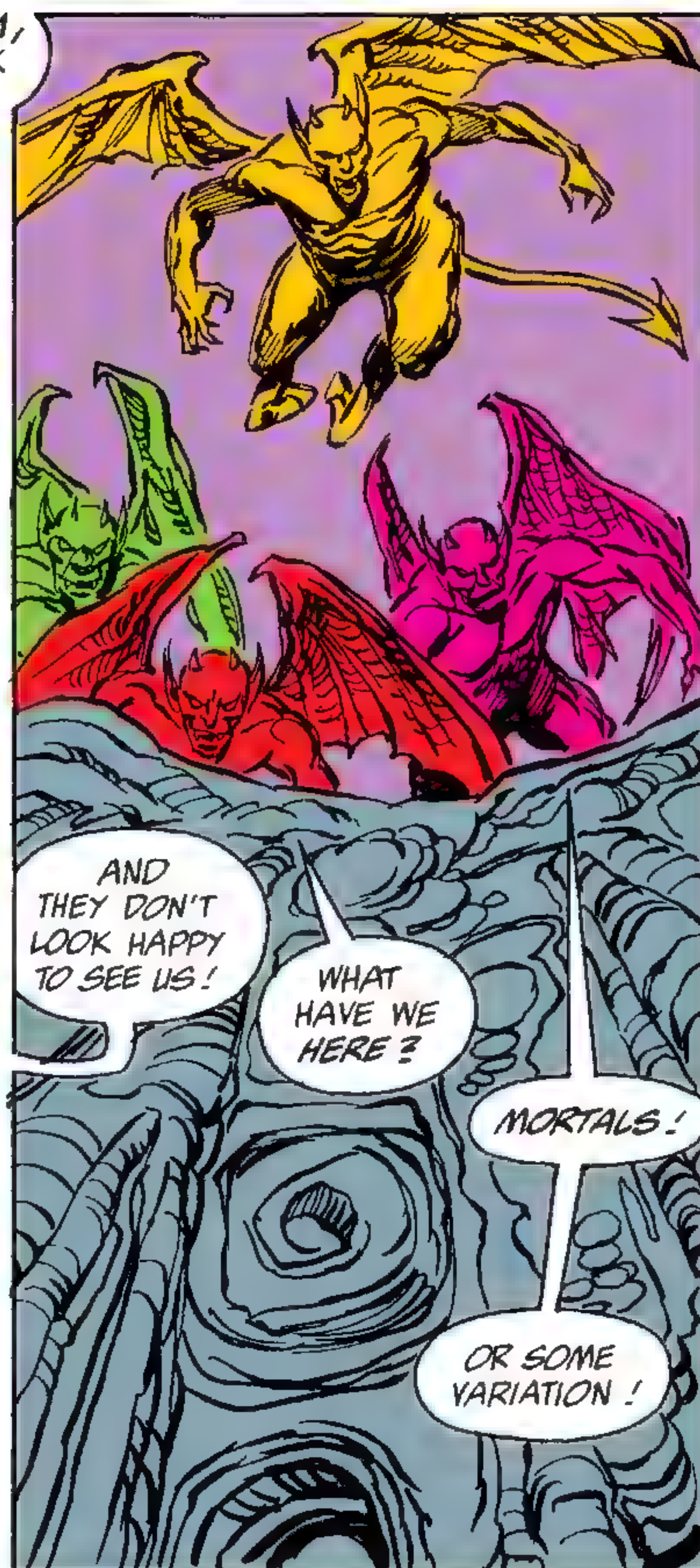
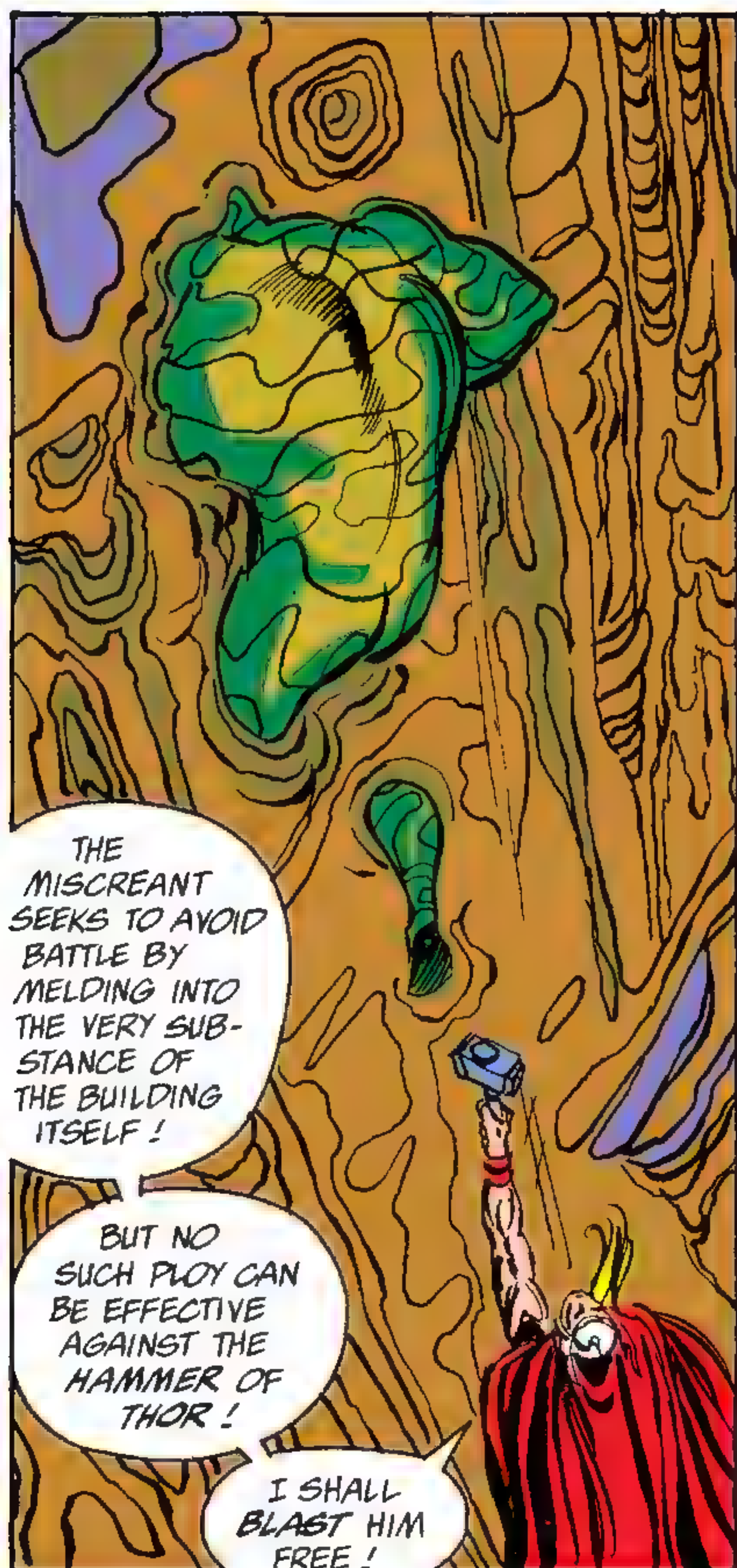
CAUTION, THOR!
CIRCLE ABOVE THE NEST!
WE NEED A SCOUTING
PARTY BEFORE WE GO
CALLING!

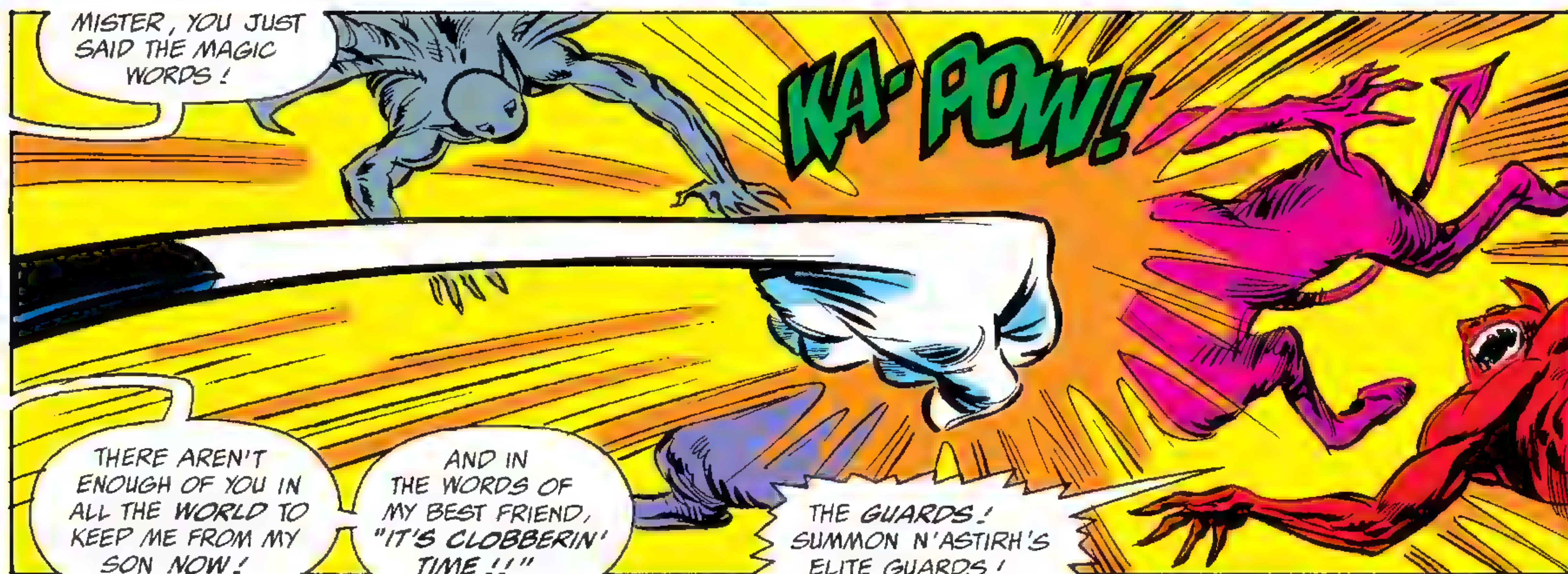
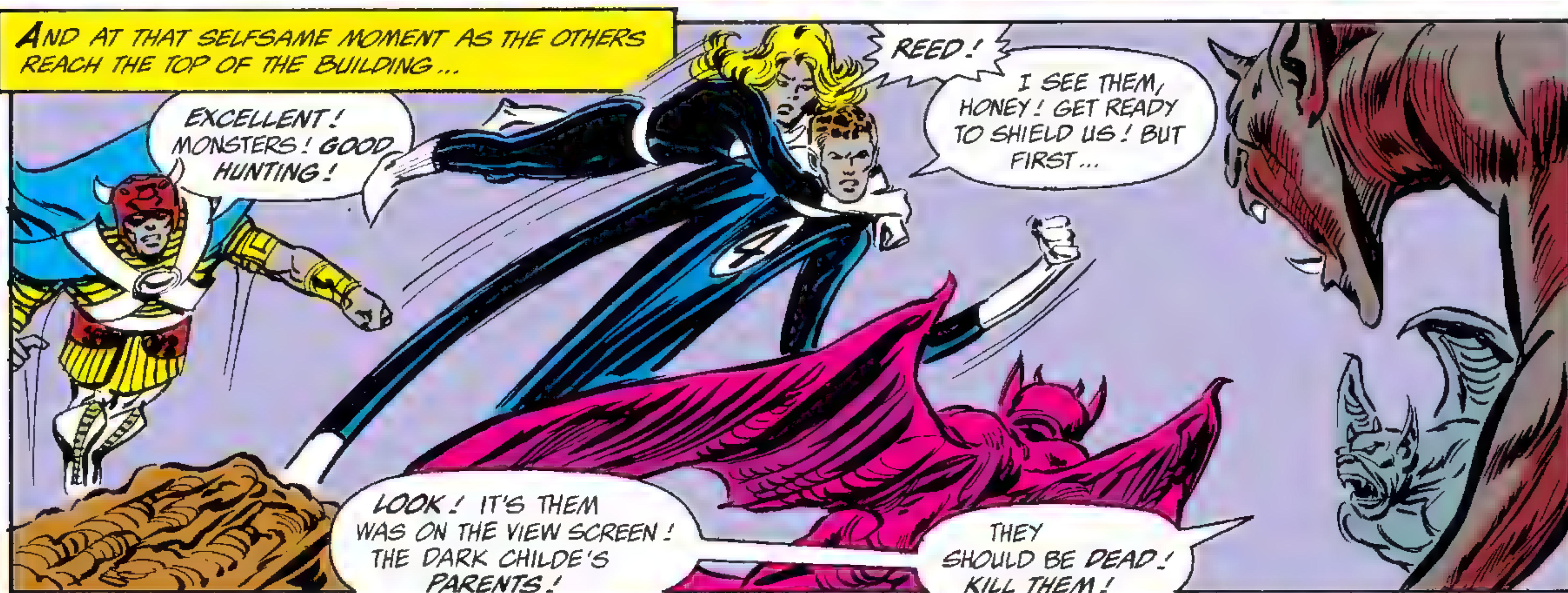
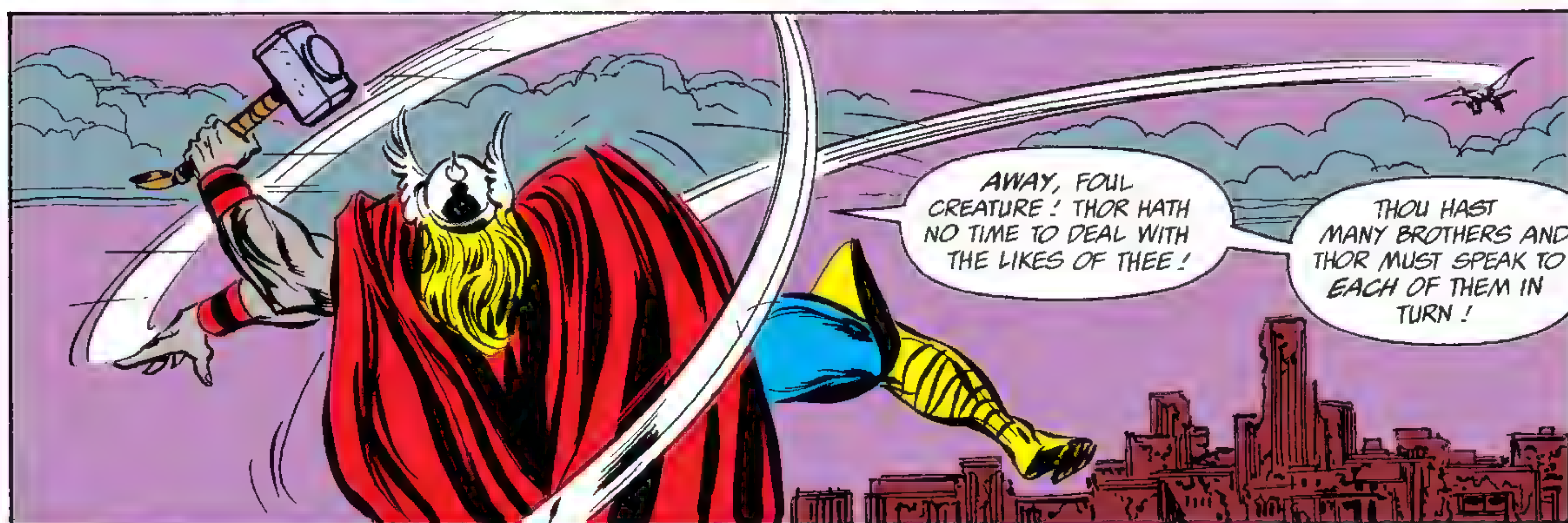
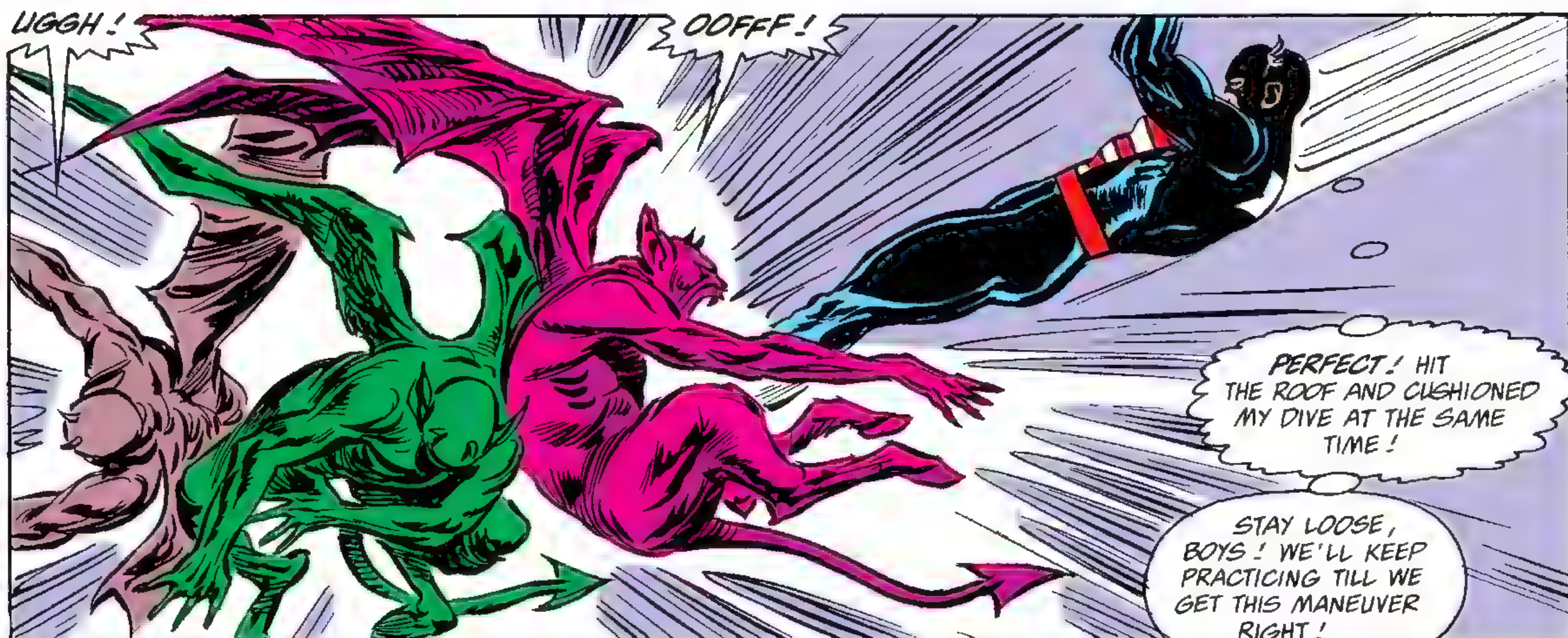


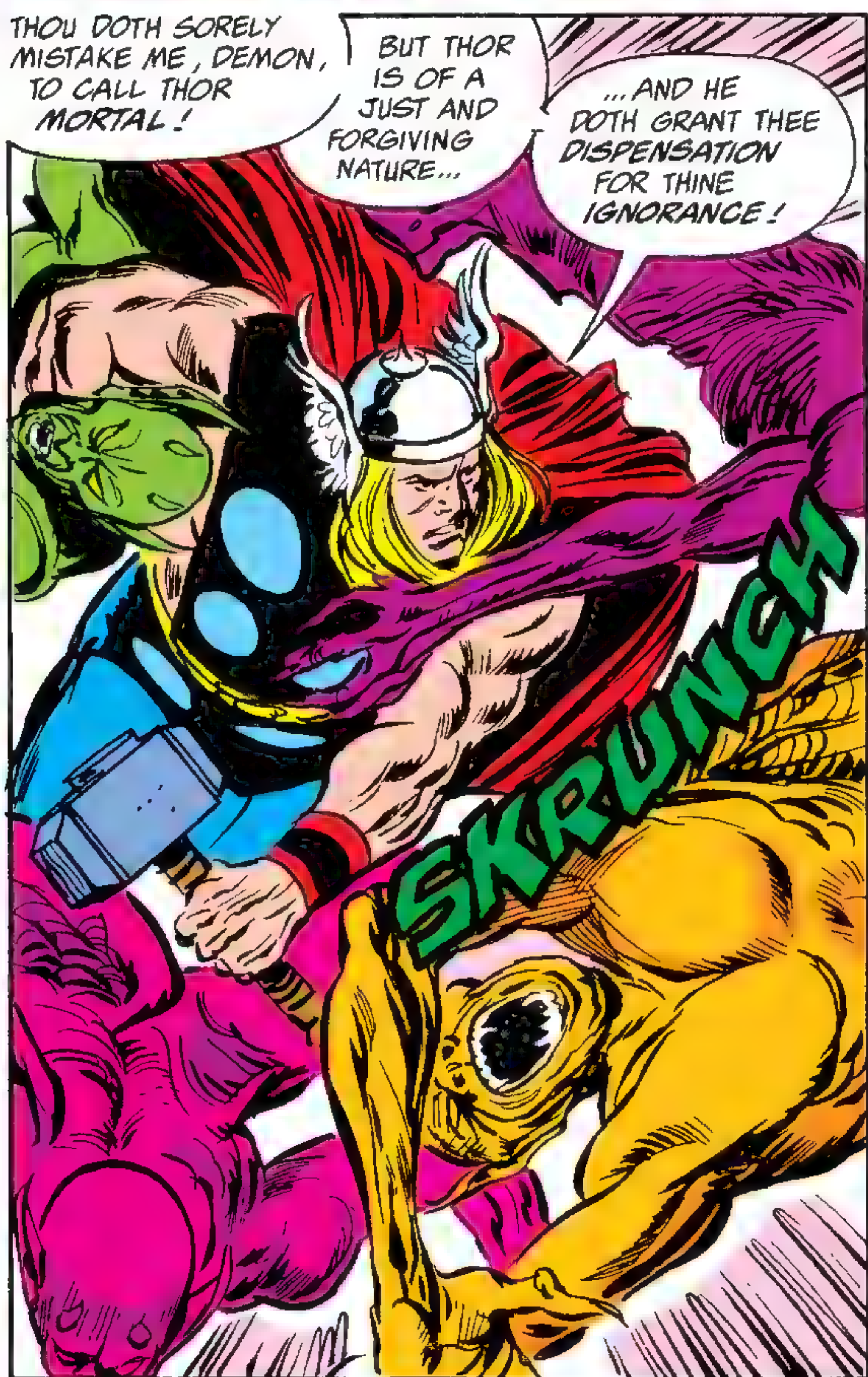
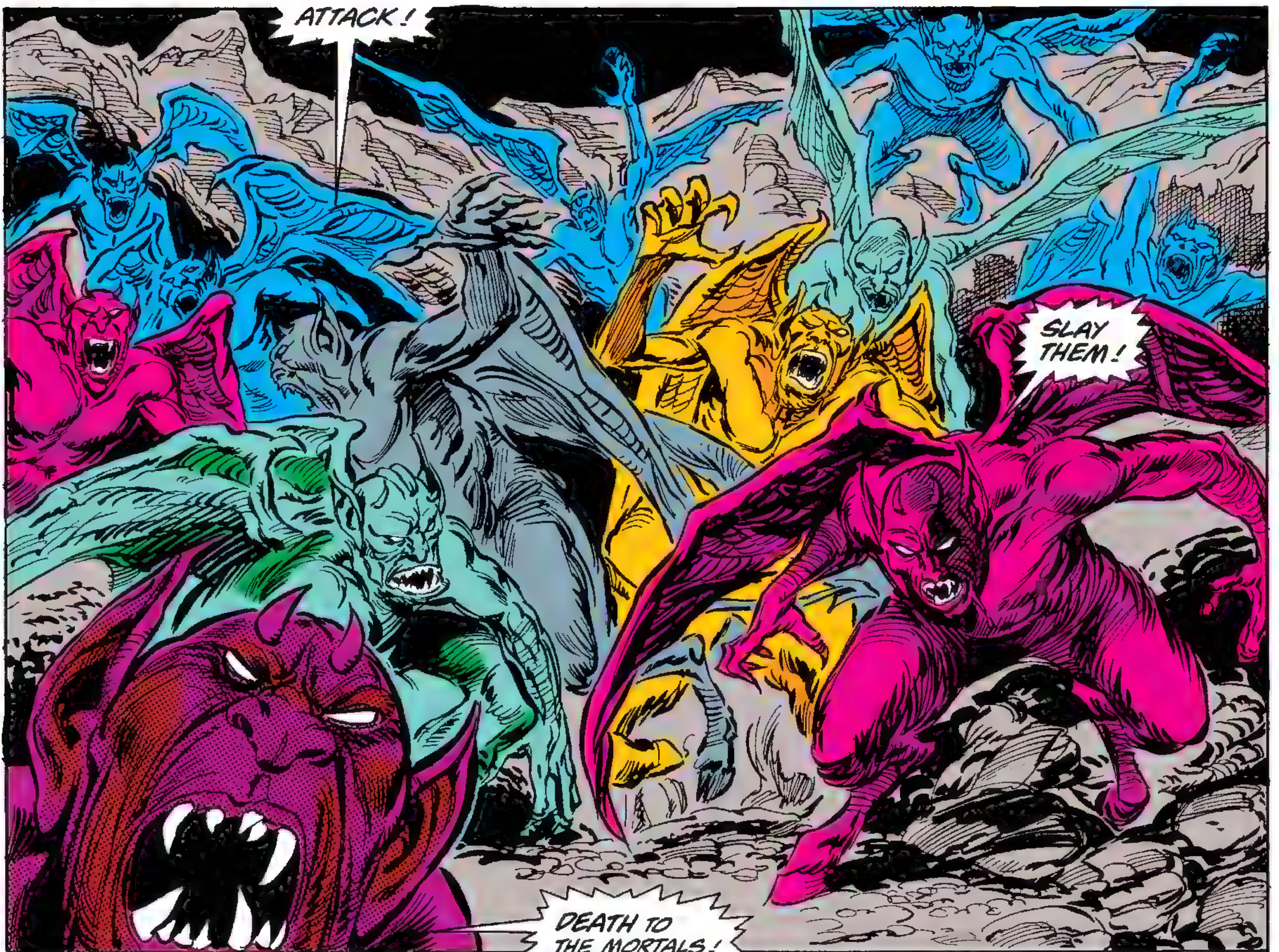
MY
INSTRUMENTS ARE
PICKING UP A STRONG
SIGNAL FROM THAT
STRUCTURE ON TOP OF
CENTER, OVERRIDING
LOCAL STATIC!

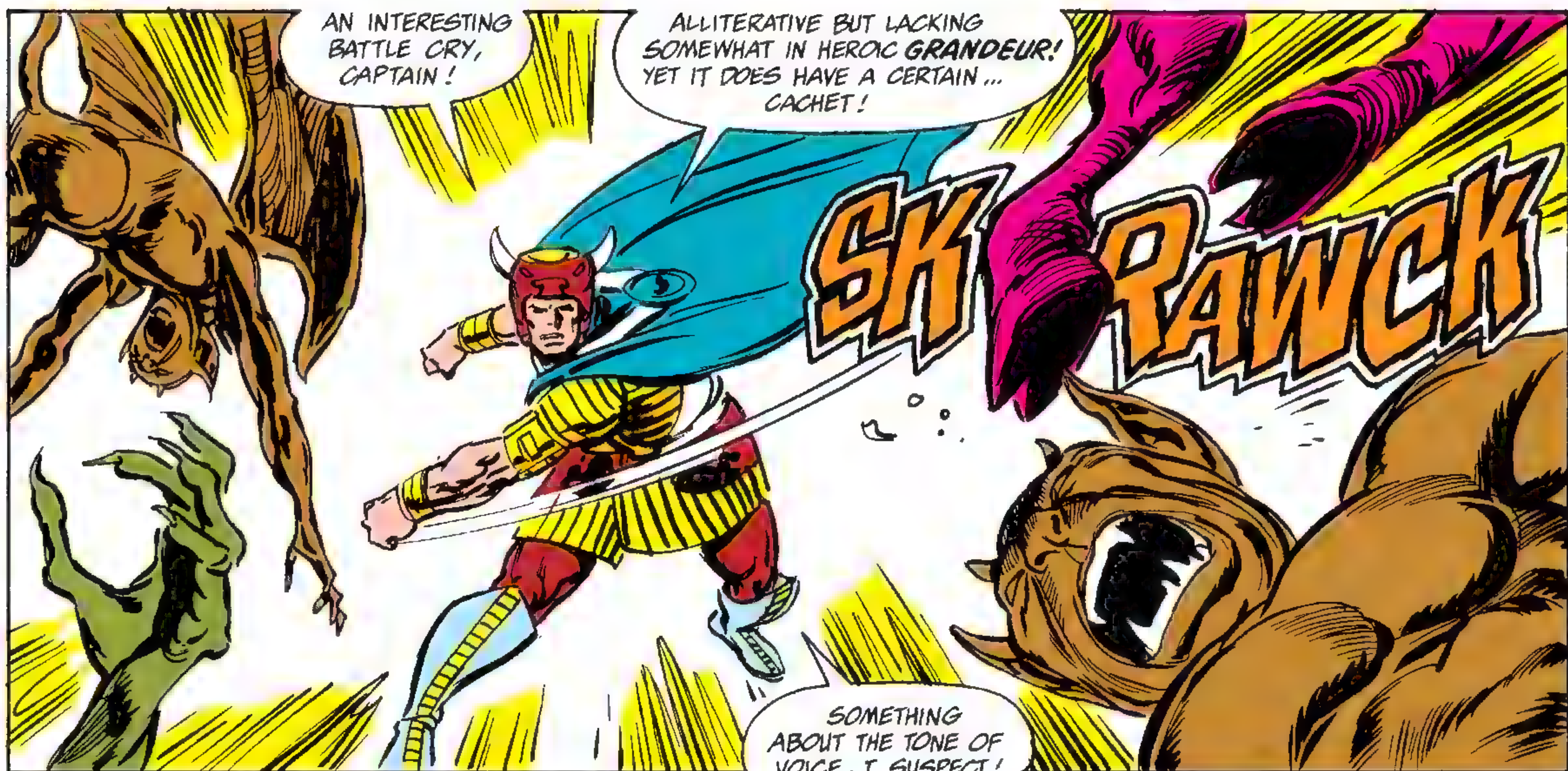
WHETHER IT'S
A TRAP OR NOT, FRANK-
LIN IS REALLY THERE!
WE'VE FOUND HIM!

LET'S GO,
SUE! OUR SON
IS WAITING!









AN INTERESTING
BATTLE CRY,
CAPTAIN!

ALLITERATIVE BUT LACKING
SOMEWHAT IN HEROIC GRANDEUR!
YET IT DOES HAVE A CERTAIN ...
CACHET!

SK RAWCK

SOMETHING
ABOUT THE TONE OF
VOICE, I SUSPECT!



REED! I CAN'T
SEE FRANKLIN ANY-
WHERE HERE INSIDE
THE -- NO!

IT
CAN'T
BE!



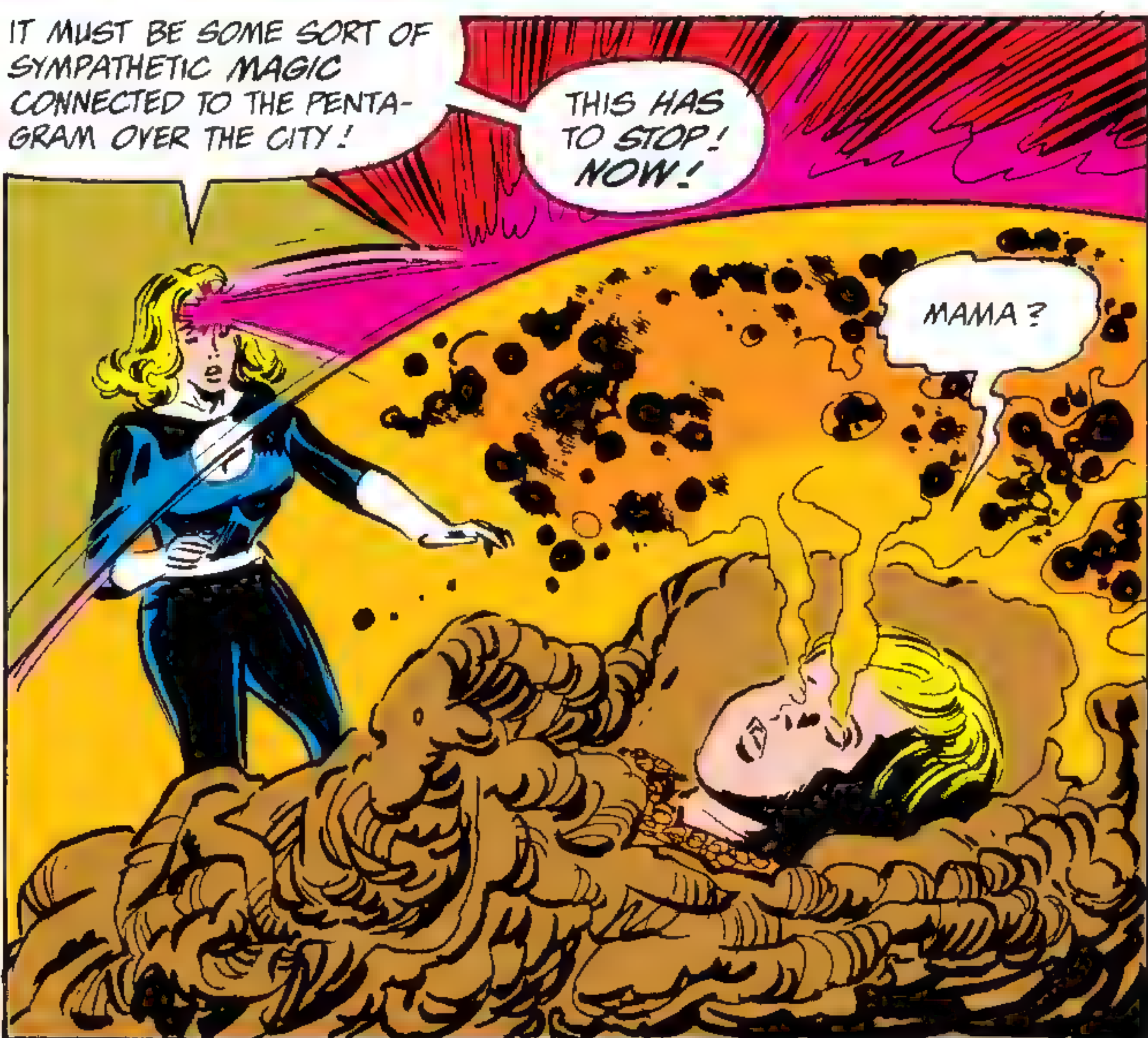
BABY! WHAT
HAVE THEY DONE
TO YOU?

KRRACKLE!



ENERGY FLOWING OUT OF HIM
INTO THAT STAR! JUST LIKE
THE BIG ONE ABOVE TIMES
SQUARE!

THEY'RE DRAINING HIM!
SUCKING HIS LIFE FORCE
OUT TO FEED THEIR HORRIBLE
MACHINERIES!



IT MUST BE SOME SORT OF
SYMPATHETIC MAGIC
CONNECTED TO THE PENTA-
GRAM OVER THE CITY!

THIS HAS
TO STOP!
NOW!

MAMA?

FIGHT IT,
FRANKLIN!

DON'T LET
THEM STEAL YOU
FROM ME!

MAMA...

HOLD ON,
HONEY! MOMMY'S
COMING!

GOT TO CONTAIN HIS ENERGIES!
CUT OFF THE FLOW INTO THE
STAR AND DESTROY THE WALL
THAT BINDS HIM!

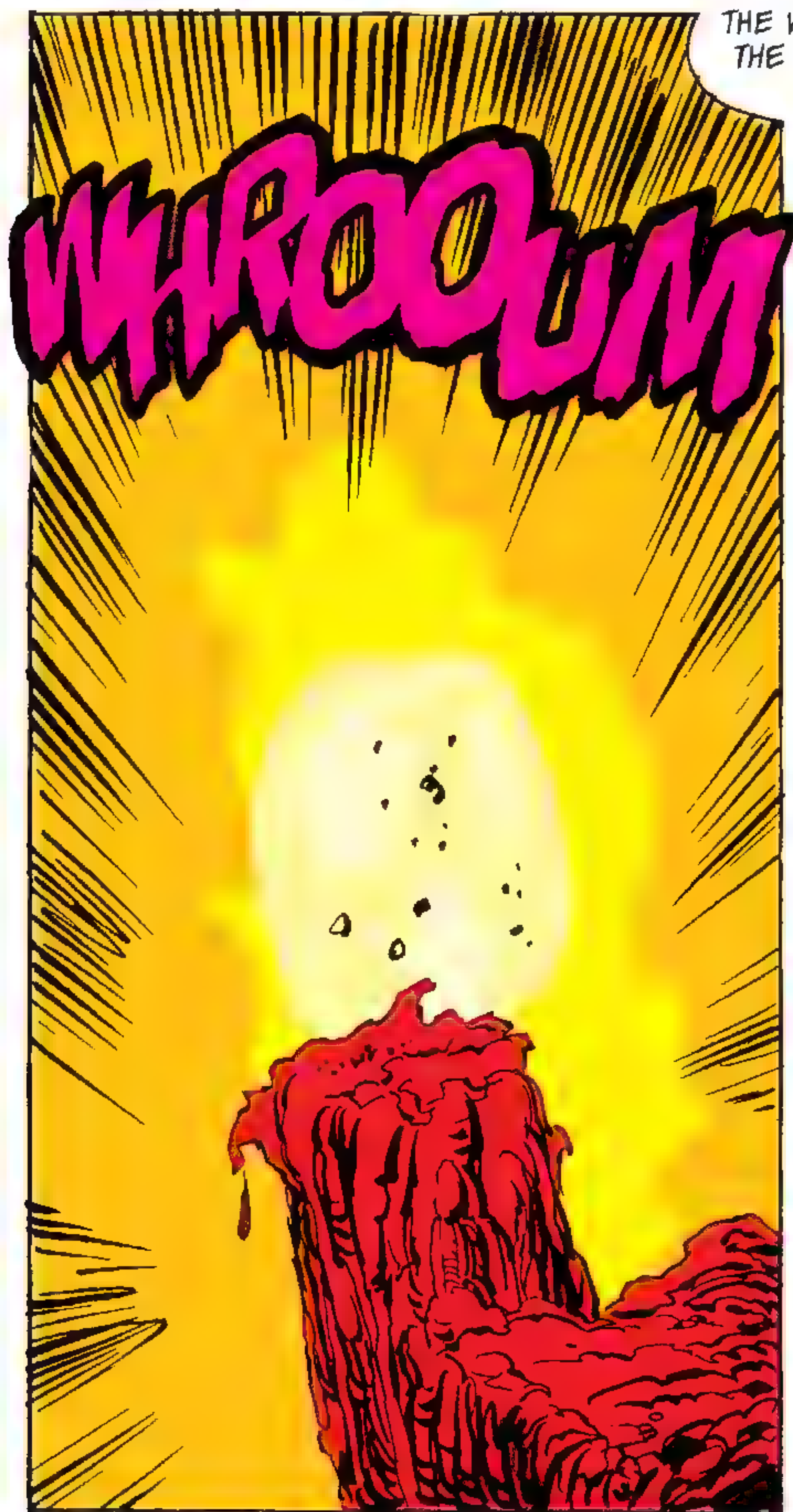
HIS OUTPUT IS
INCREDIBLE!

MY FORCE
SHIELD'S... ALMOST
STRETCHED... TO
THE LIMIT!

I... CAN'T
HOLD... FRANKLIN'S
ENERGY... IN ANY
MORE...

P... PASSING
OUT...

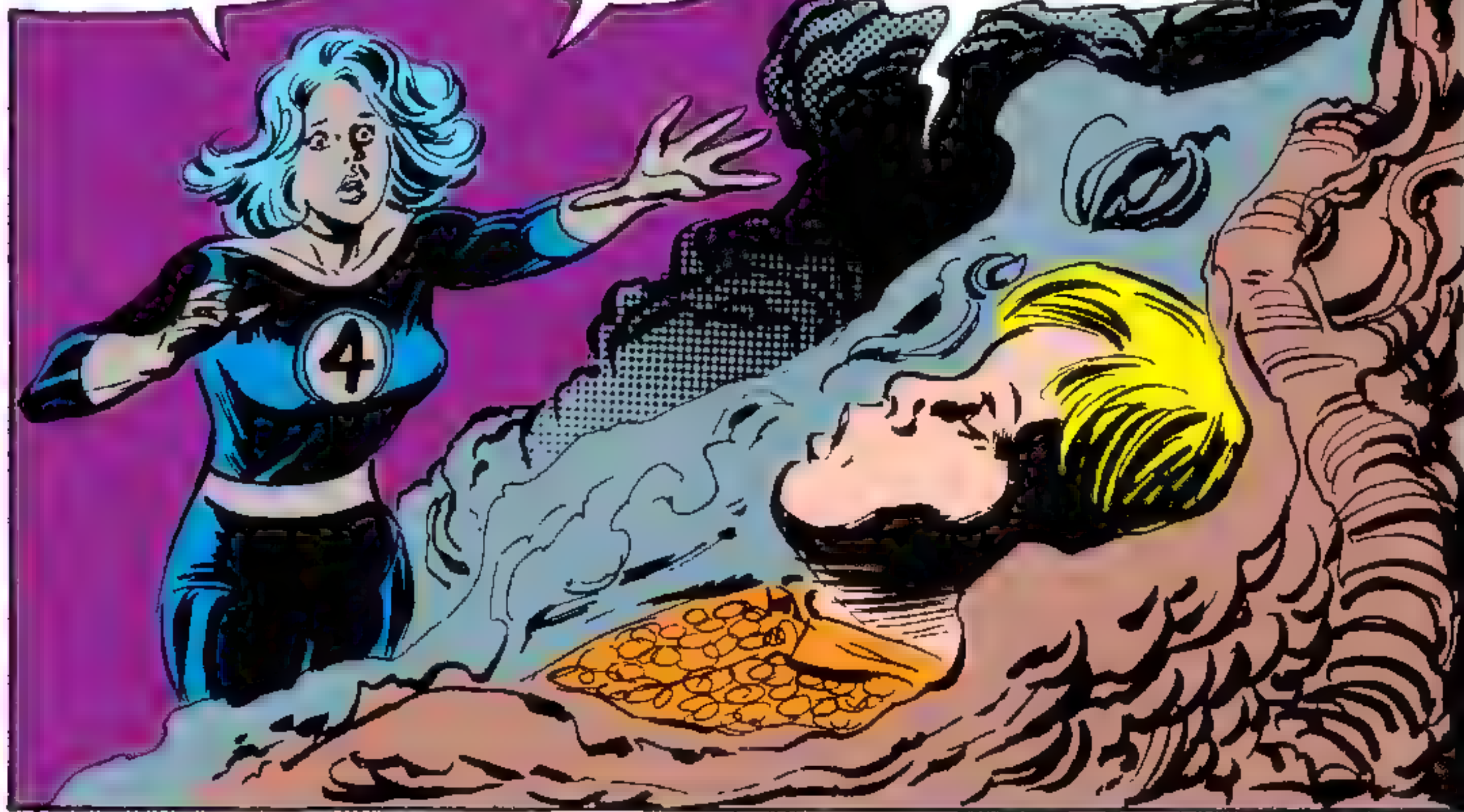
MAMA...



THE WALL... DESTROYED!
THE FEEDBACK BLEW
IT APART!

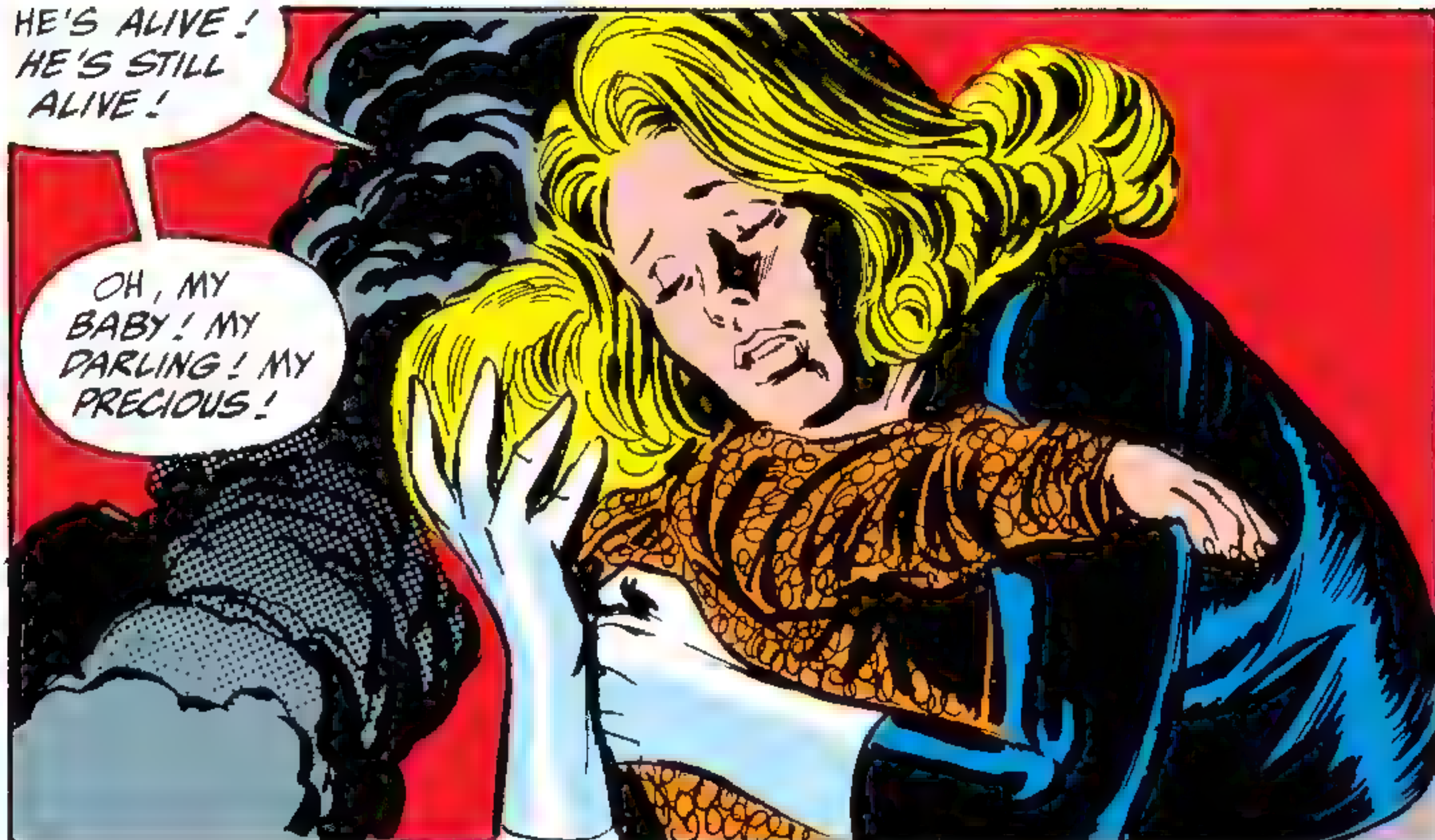
BUT IS
HE--?

MOMMMM... AAA...



HE'S ALIVE!
HE'S STILL
ALIVE!

OH, MY
BABY! MY
DARLING! MY
PRECIOUS!



AND HIGH ABOVE TIMES SQUARE...

EEEEEEEEEE--

SHREEACH!

BOOM

UH OH.

PENTAGRAM DESTROYED!

THAT MEANS THE STEPPING DISK FROM LIMBO GONE!

AND WOULD DO IT AGAIN IF NECESSARY, CREATURES OF EVIL!

N'ASTIRH BE PLENTY ANGRY! HE BLAME US!

KILL! KILL THE HUMANS! THEY DID IT!

A panel showing Thor, Iron Man, and Hulk in combat with several demons. Thor is in the center, Iron Man is to his left, and Hulk is in the foreground. They are surrounded by red, horned demons. Iron Man is shouting, "N'ASTIRH BE PLENTY ANGRY! HE BLAME US!". Hulk is shouting, "KILL! KILL THE HUMANS! THEY DID IT!". Thor is shouting, "AND WOULD DO IT AGAIN IF NECESSARY, CREATURES OF EVIL!".

THY LESSONS, 'TWOULD SEEM, ARE INCOMPLETE! THOR SHALL TEACH THEE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORTALS AND GODS!

SKABLAM

A panel showing Thor fighting a large green demon. Thor is on the left, swinging his hammer. The green demon is on the right, being hit by the hammer. The sound effect "SKABLAM" is written in large letters. Thor is shouting, "THY LESSONS, 'TWOULD SEEM, ARE INCOMPLETE! THOR SHALL TEACH THEE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORTALS AND GODS!".

I MIGHT ADD THAT A FEW LESSONS IN HAND TO HAND COMBAT PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE AMISS EITHER...

...BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE ME IF I DON'T PROVIDE THEM!

KRAK!

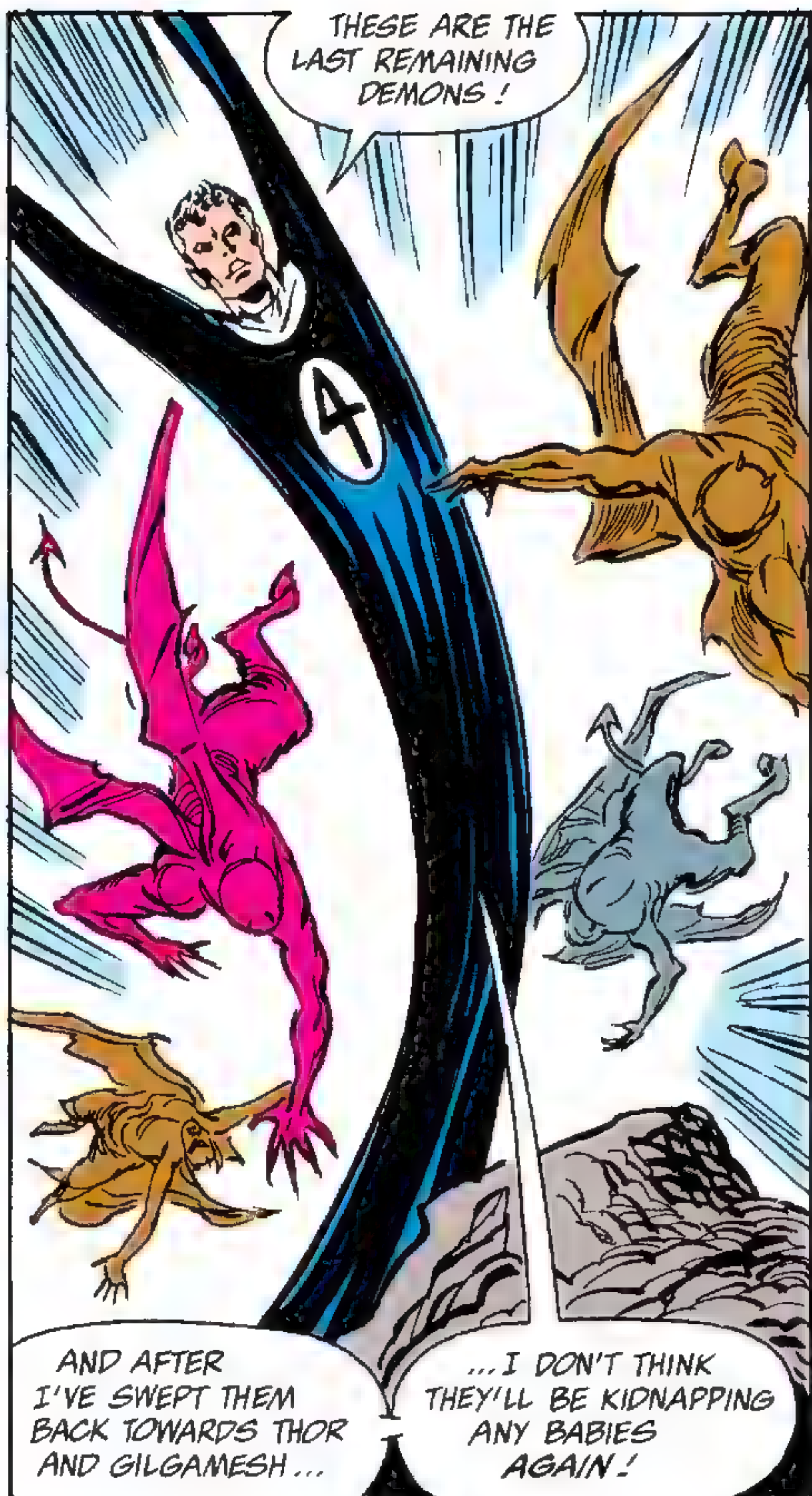
A panel showing Iron Man fighting a demon. Iron Man is on the left, punching the demon. The demon is on the right, being hit. The sound effect "KRAK!" is written in large letters. Iron Man is shouting, "I MIGHT ADD THAT A FEW LESSONS IN HAND TO HAND COMBAT PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE AMISS EITHER...". The demon is shouting, "...BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE ME IF I DON'T PROVIDE THEM!".

MORTALS! IMMORTALS! THE DESTRUCTION OF EVIL IS THE DUTY OF EVERY MORAL BEING NO MATTER WHAT HIS LIFESPAN!

THWHRAM!

AND THE DESTRUCTION OF MONSTERS IS THE DESTINY OF GILGAMESH!

A panel showing Hulk fighting a demon. Hulk is on the left, punching the demon. The demon is on the right, being hit. The sound effect "THWHRAM!" is written in large letters. Hulk is shouting, "MORTALS! IMMORTALS! THE DESTRUCTION OF EVIL IS THE DUTY OF EVERY MORAL BEING NO MATTER WHAT HIS LIFESPAN!". The demon is shouting, "AND THE DESTRUCTION OF MONSTERS IS THE DESTINY OF GILGAMESH!".



THESE ARE THE
LAST REMAINING
DEMONS!

AND AFTER
I'VE SWEEPED THEM
BACK TOWARDS THOR
AND GILGAMESH...

...I DON'T THINK
THEY'LL BE KIDNAPPING
ANY BABIES
AGAIN!



AND SHORTLY...

THAT'S
THAT.

BEHOLD. THEY BEGIN
TO EMIT A STRANGE
RADIATION.

THEY'RE
DISINTEGRATING,
TURNING TO
DUST! STAND
BACK!



GILGAMESH! THOU DOTH
BEAR AN HEROIC NAME
OF LEGEND.

AND IN THIS MATTER,
THOU HAST ACQUITTED THY-
SELF WITH HONOR.

THOR IS PROUD
TO HAVE FOUGHT WITH
SO VALIANT A
WARRIOR.

THOR
SAYS IT WITH
FLOWERS
BUT HE
SPEAKS FOR
ME AS
WELL.

NICELY DONE.
YOU WOULDN'T BE
STICKING AROUND
FOR AWHILE?

WILL
THERE BE MORE
MONSTERS?

MISTER, FIGHTING
MONSTERS IS WHAT THE
AVENGERS DOES BEST!

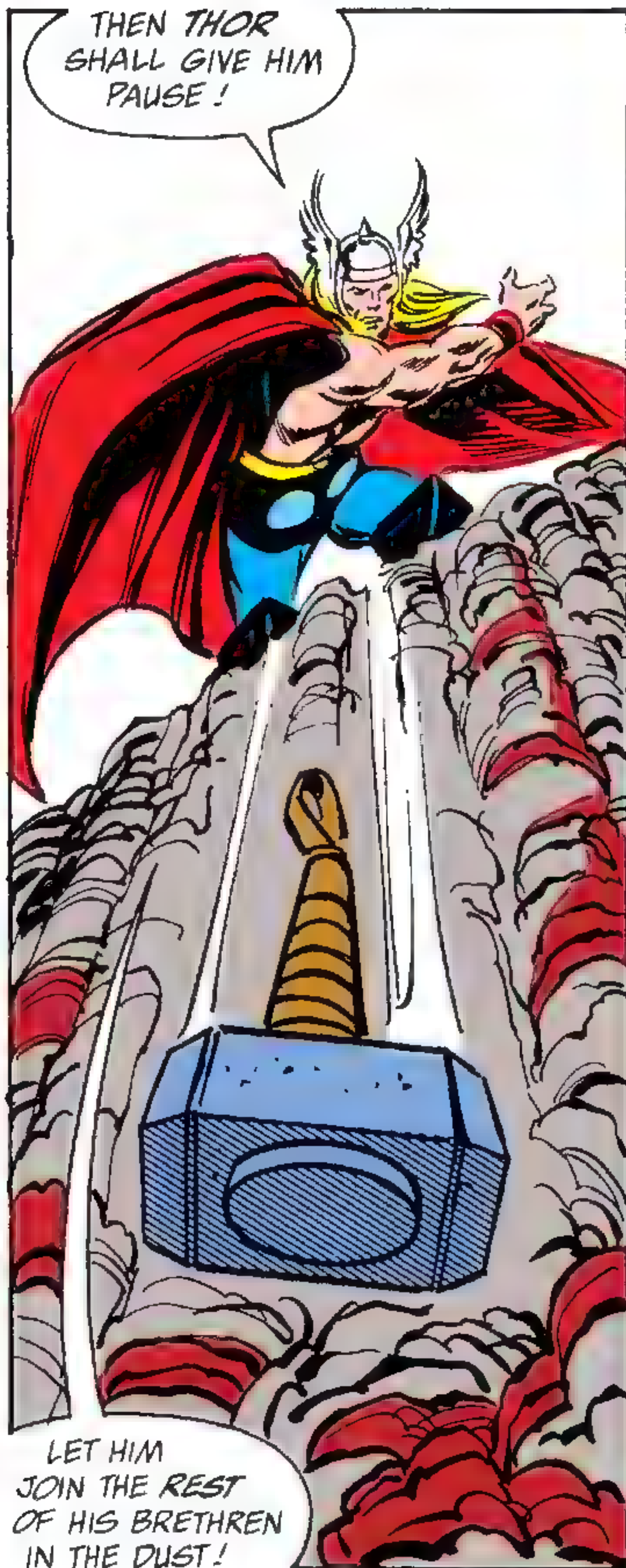
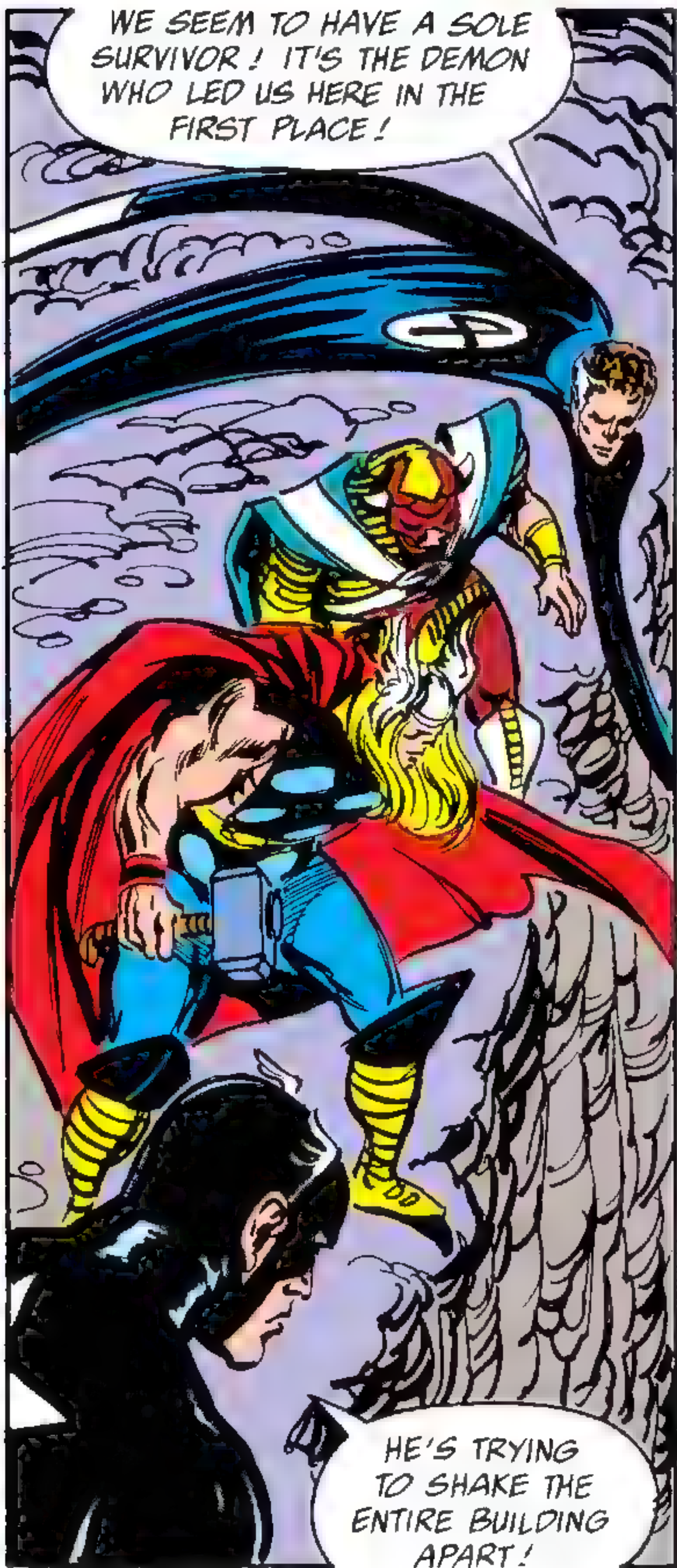
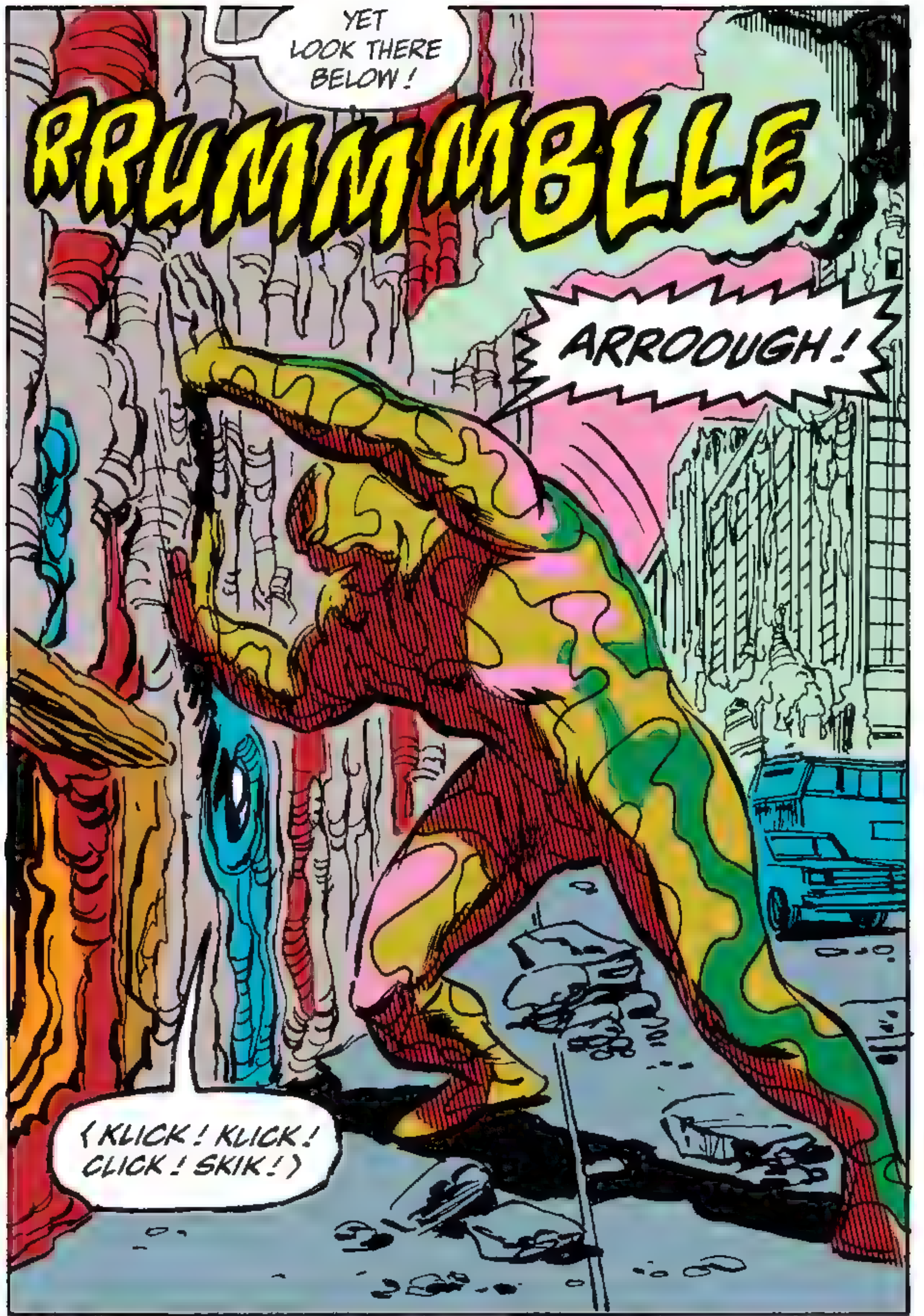


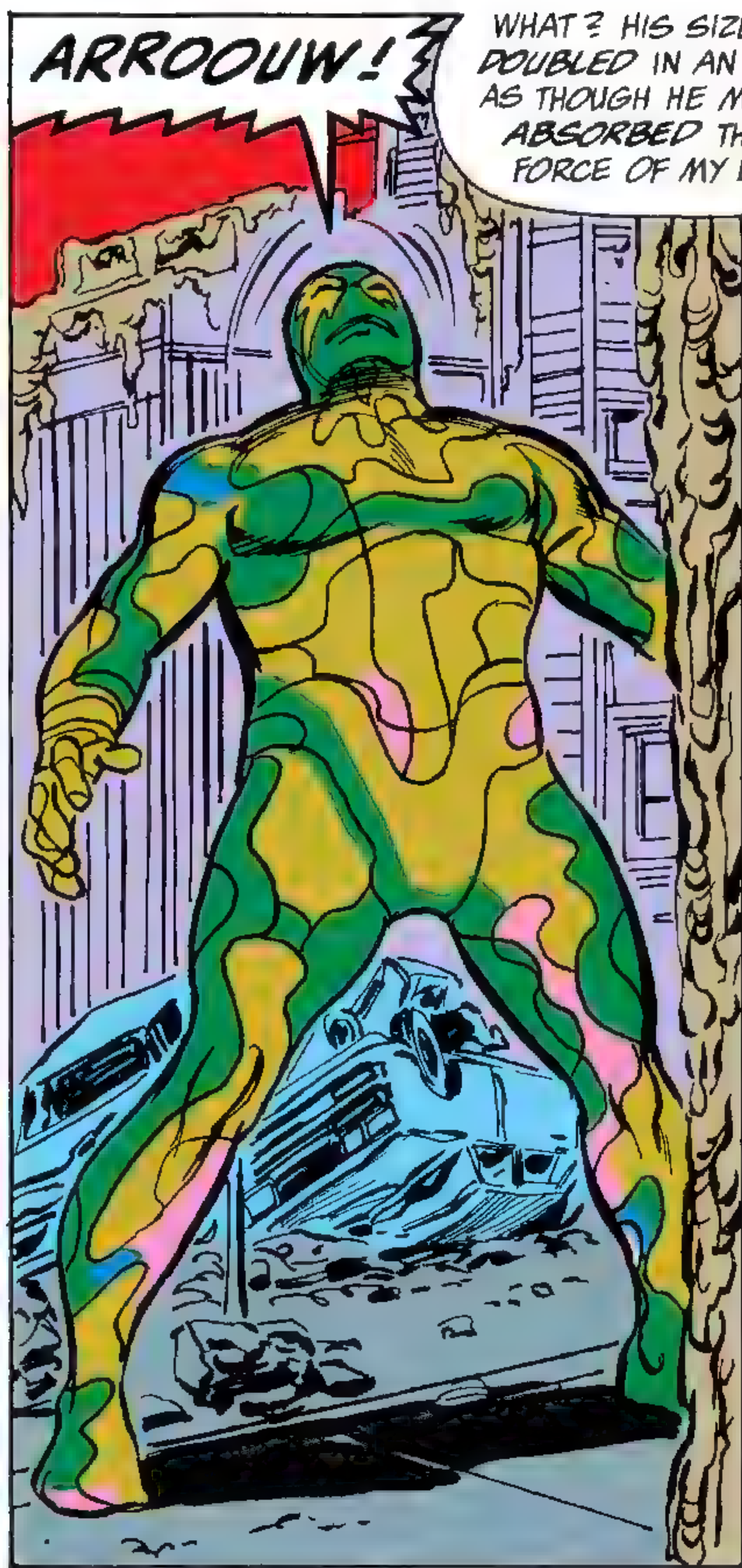
HOW IS HE,
DARLING?

ALREADY ASLEEP.
BUT UNHARMED, I
THINK.

REED, WE
MUST GET HIM HOME
AS QUICKLY AS
POSSIBLE.

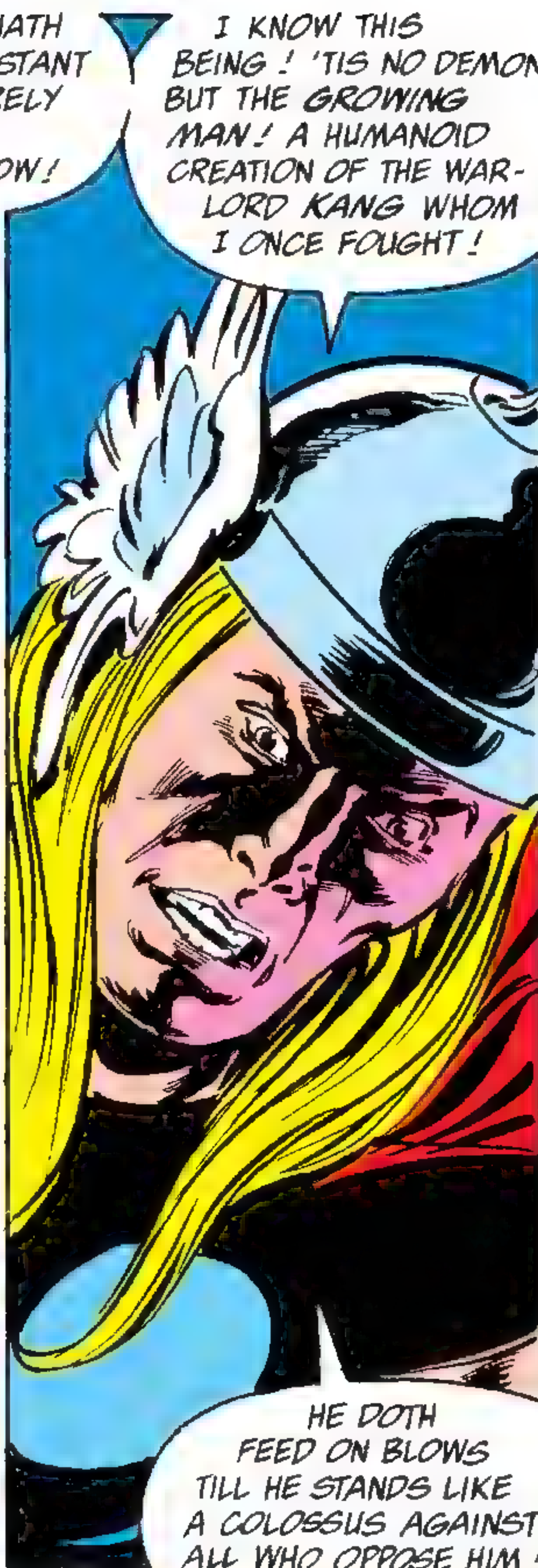
AND HE'LL
NEED TO SEE A
DOCTOR.





ARROUW!

WHAT? HIS SIZE HATH
DOUBLED IN AN INSTANT
AS THOUGH HE MERELY
ABSORBED THE
FORCE OF MY BLOW!



I KNOW THIS
BEING! 'TIS NO DEMON
BUT THE GROWING
MAN! A HUMANOID
CREATION OF THE WAR-
LORD KANG WHOM
I ONCE FOUGHT!

HE DOTH
FEED ON BLOWS
TILL HE STANDS LIKE
A COLOSSUS AGAINST
ALL WHO OPPOSE HIM!



BUT WHAT DOES
KANG HAVE TO
DO WITH THESE
DEMONS?

WE'LL HAVE TO UN-
COVER THAT LATER!
RIGHT NOW, OUR FRIEND
SEEMS INTENT ON DE-
STROYING THE FOUNDA-
TIONS OF THE WORLD
TRADE CENTER!

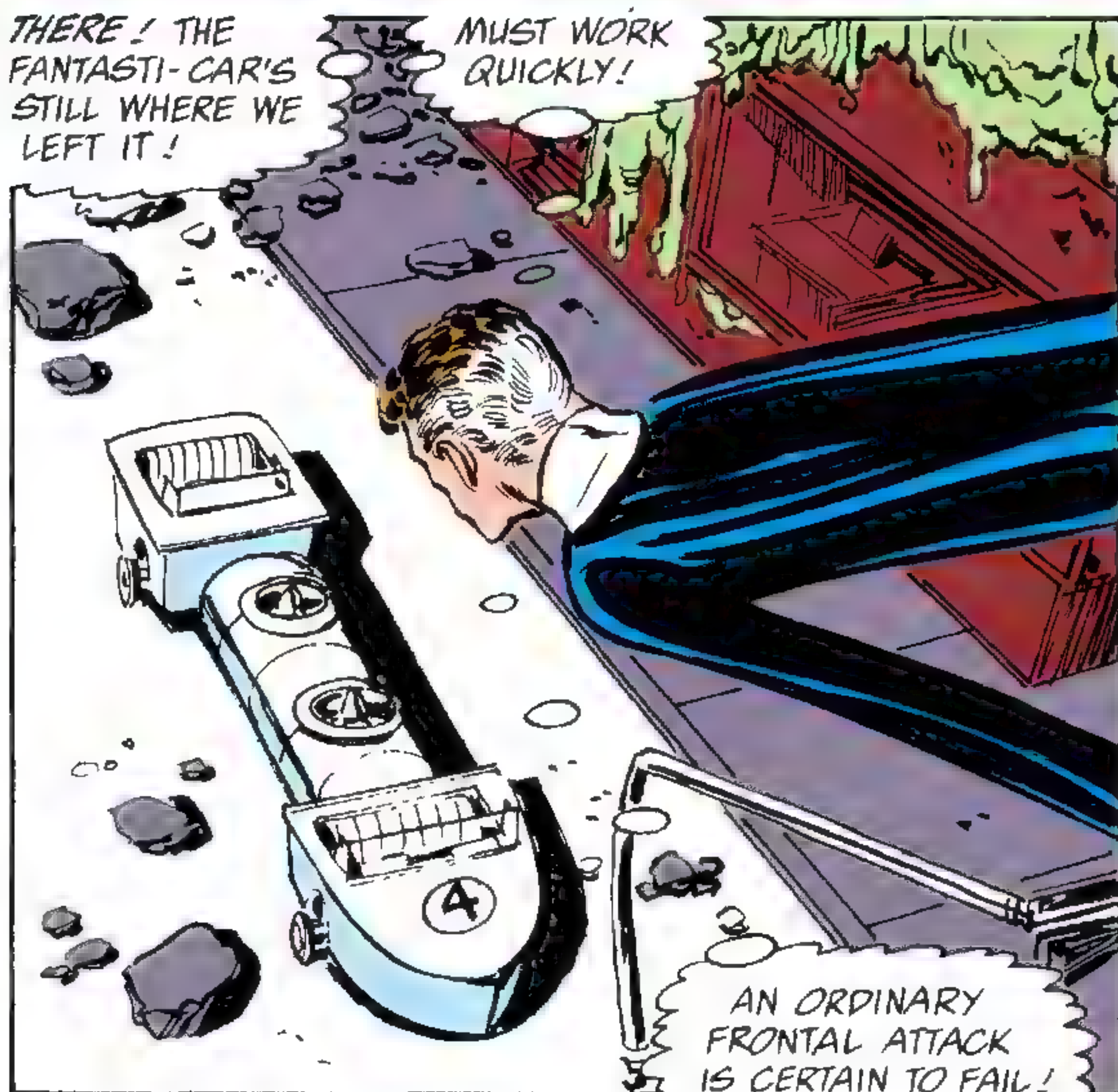
AND IT LOOKS
TO ME AS THOUGH
HE'S RUNNING
WILD!

HOLD THE
FORT! AND DON'T
STRIKE HIM IF YOU
CAN HELP IT!



GOT TO STRETCH TO
MY ELASTIC LIMIT UP
TO THE WEST SIDE!

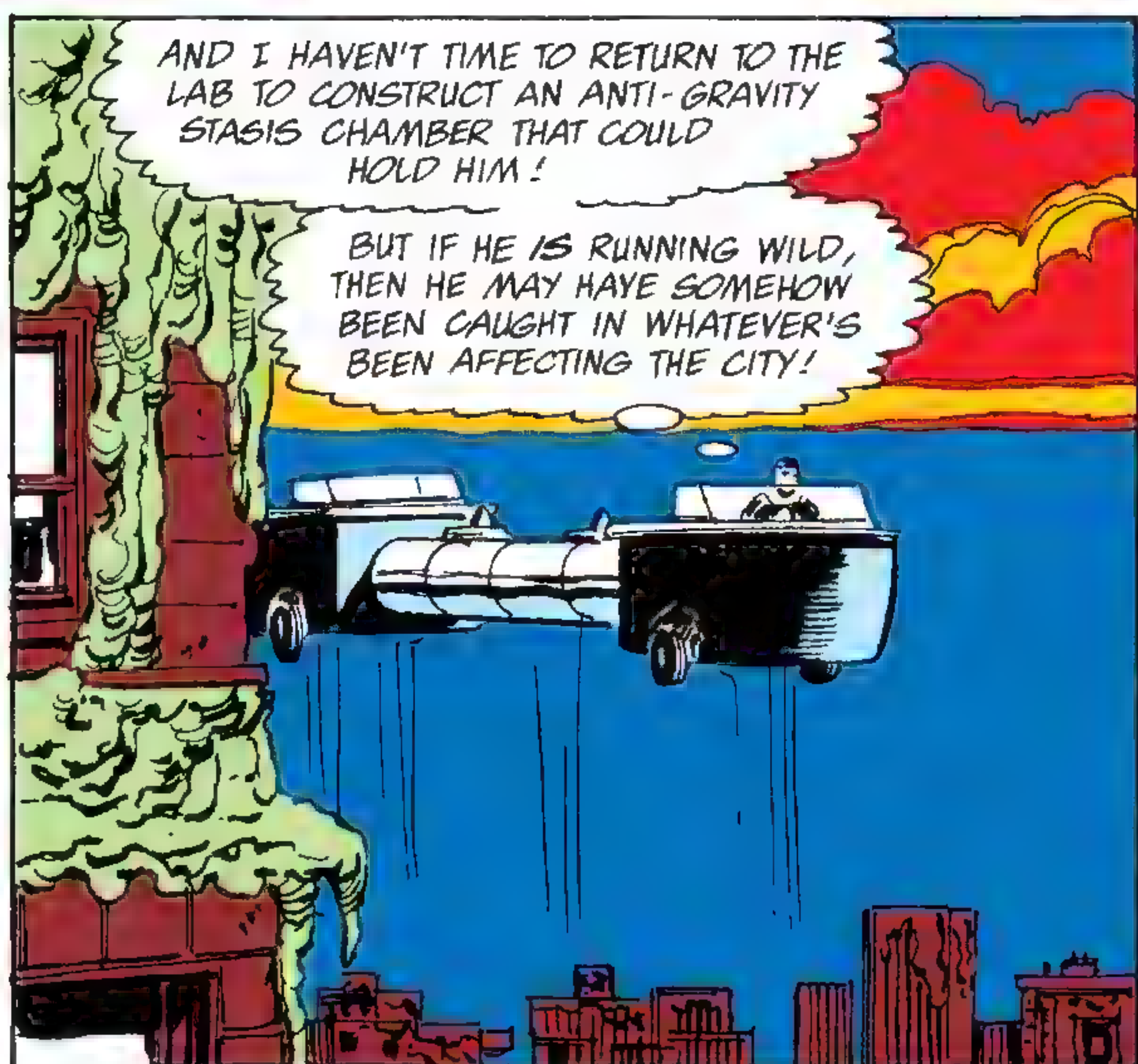
IF HE REALLY IS ABLE
TO ABSORB KINETIC ENERGY,
THOR AND GILGAMESH ARE
THE LAST PEOPLE WE NEED
ATTACKING HIM!



THERE! THE
FANTASTI-CAR'S
STILL WHERE WE
LEFT IT!

MUST WORK
QUICKLY!

AN ORDINARY
FRONTAL ATTACK
IS CERTAIN TO FAIL!



AND I HAVEN'T TIME TO RETURN TO THE
LAB TO CONSTRUCT AN ANTI-GRAVITY
STASIS CHAMBER THAT COULD
HOLD HIM!

BUT IF HE IS RUNNING WILD,
THEN HE MAY HAVE SOMEHOW
BEEN CAUGHT IN WHATEVER'S
BEEN AFFECTING THE CITY!

AND THAT MAY
GIVE US OUR
OPPORTUNITY!

...ALONG WITH HIGH
ENERGY SURGE
ENHANCEMENT...

IF ONLY
IT'S NOT TOO
LATE!

SOME PHASE
ADJUSTMENTS TO
THE FRONT
THRUSTERS...

...AND WE
MAY GET
LUCKY!

HE'S ALMOST KNOCKED
ENOUGH OF THE FOUNDATION
APART TO TOPPLE THE
BUILDING!

KRUNCH

ALL RIGHT, ANDROID!
LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE
MADE OF!

ARROO <KLICK> UUGH!

FTZAPT!

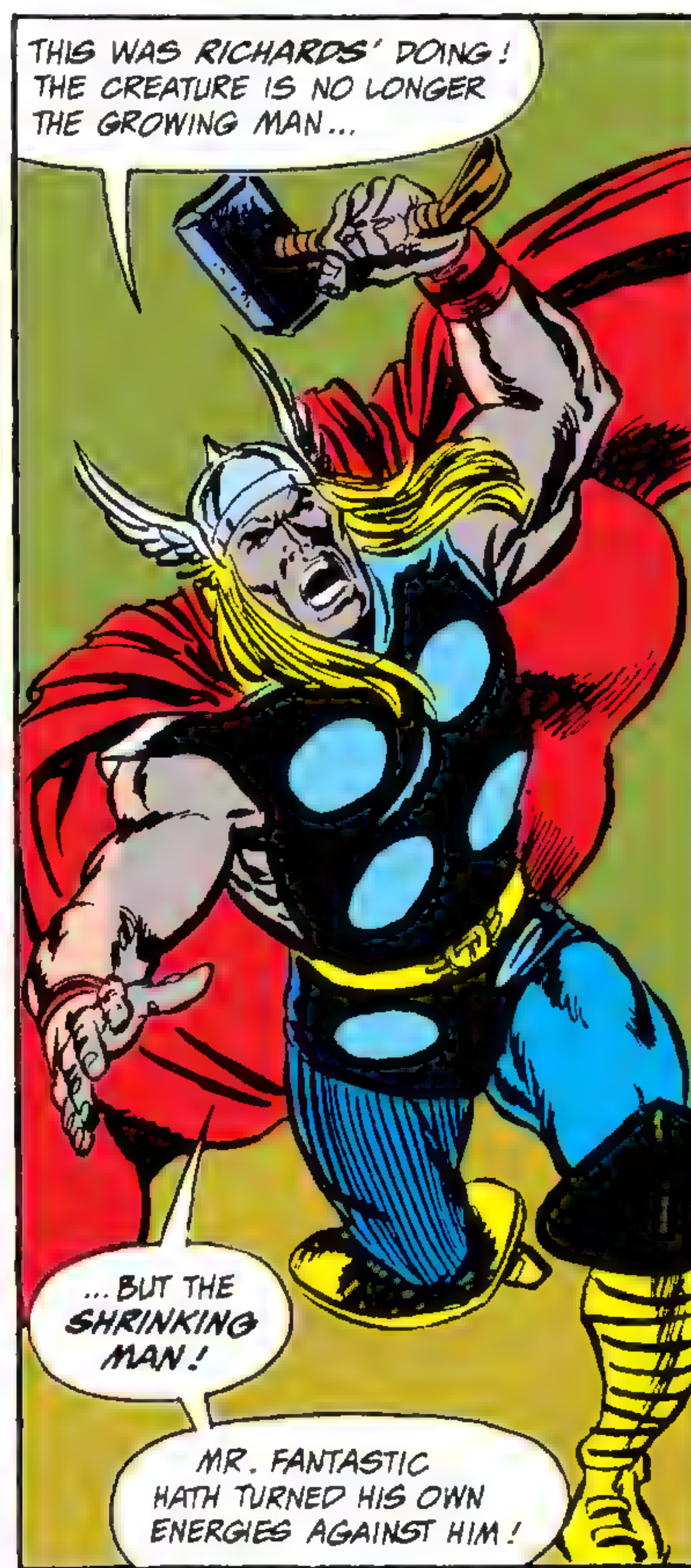
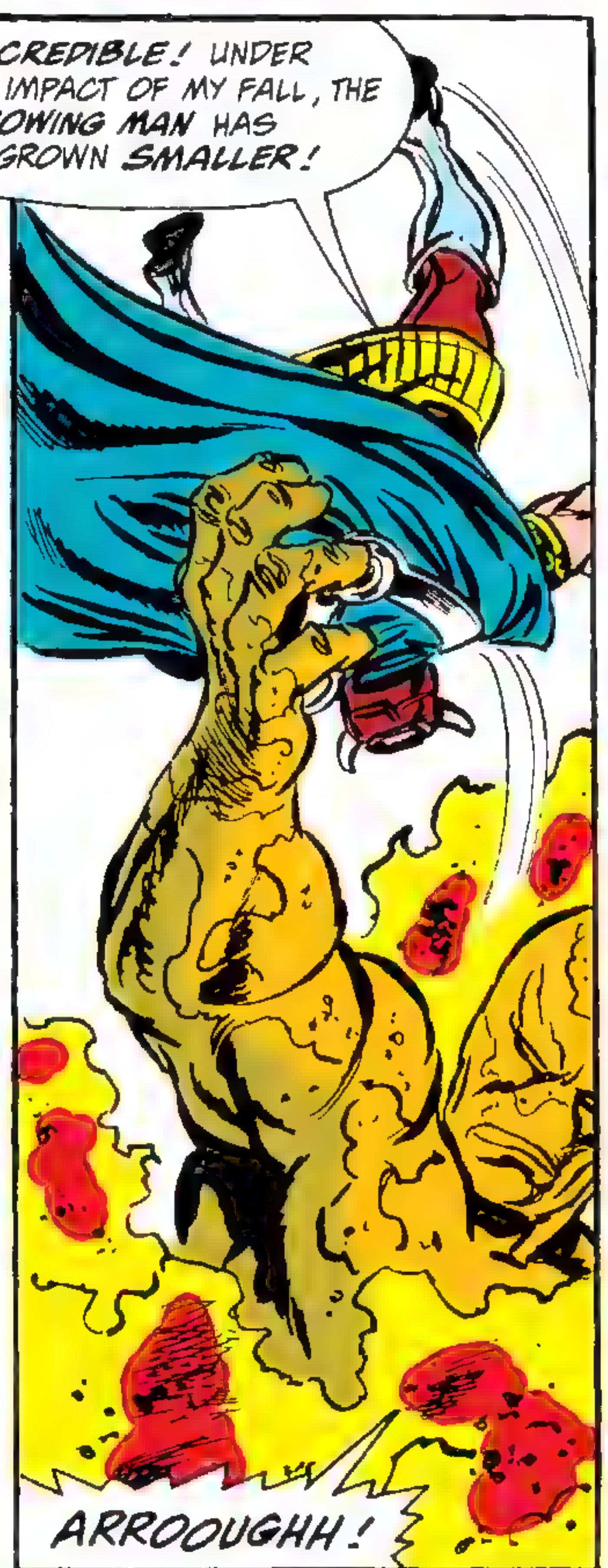
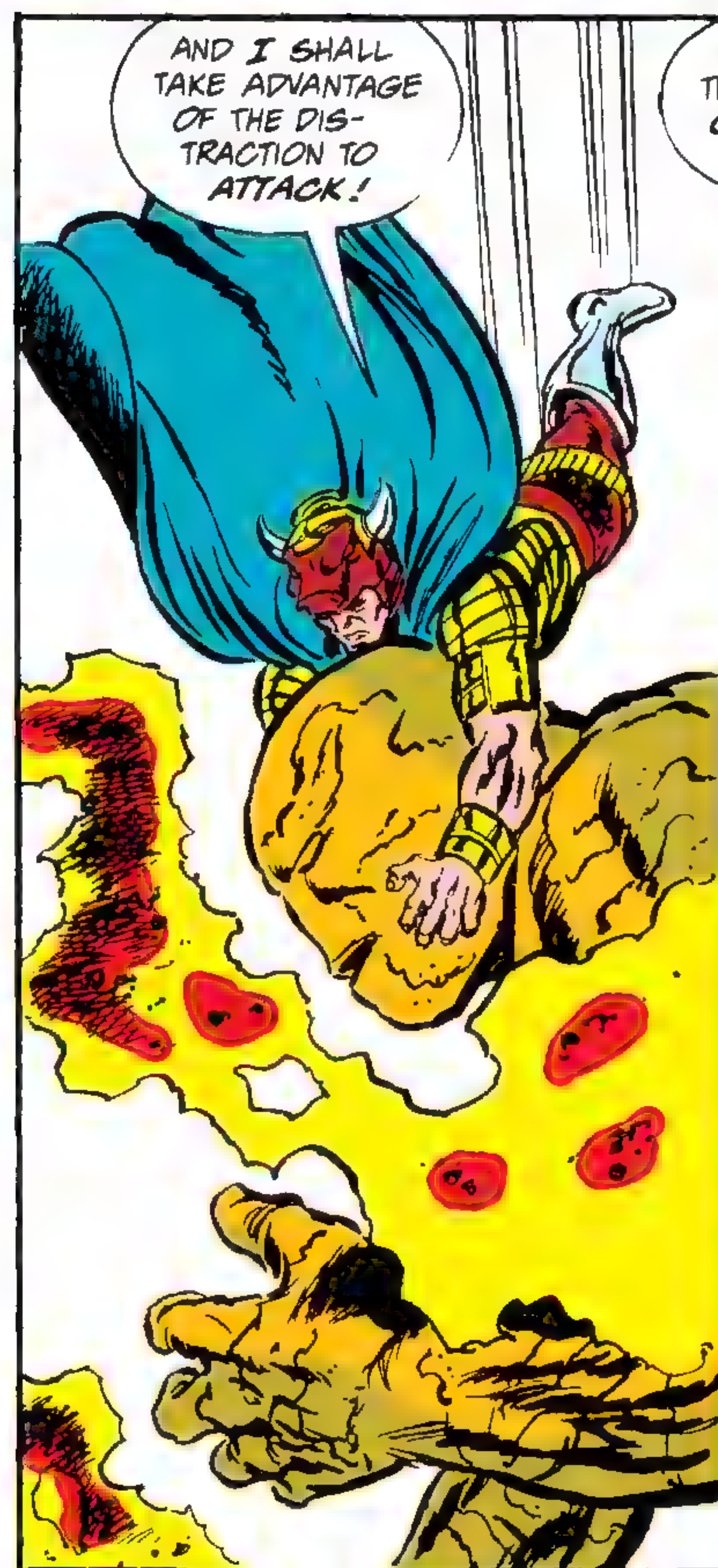
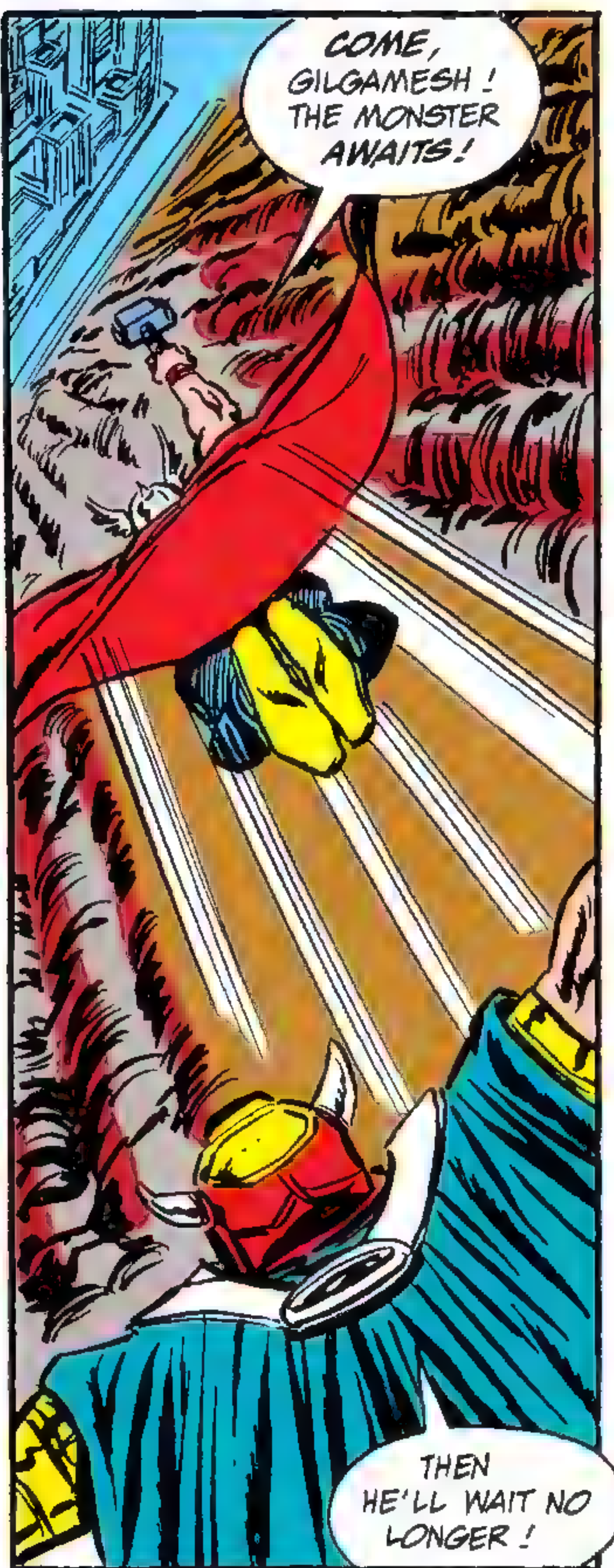
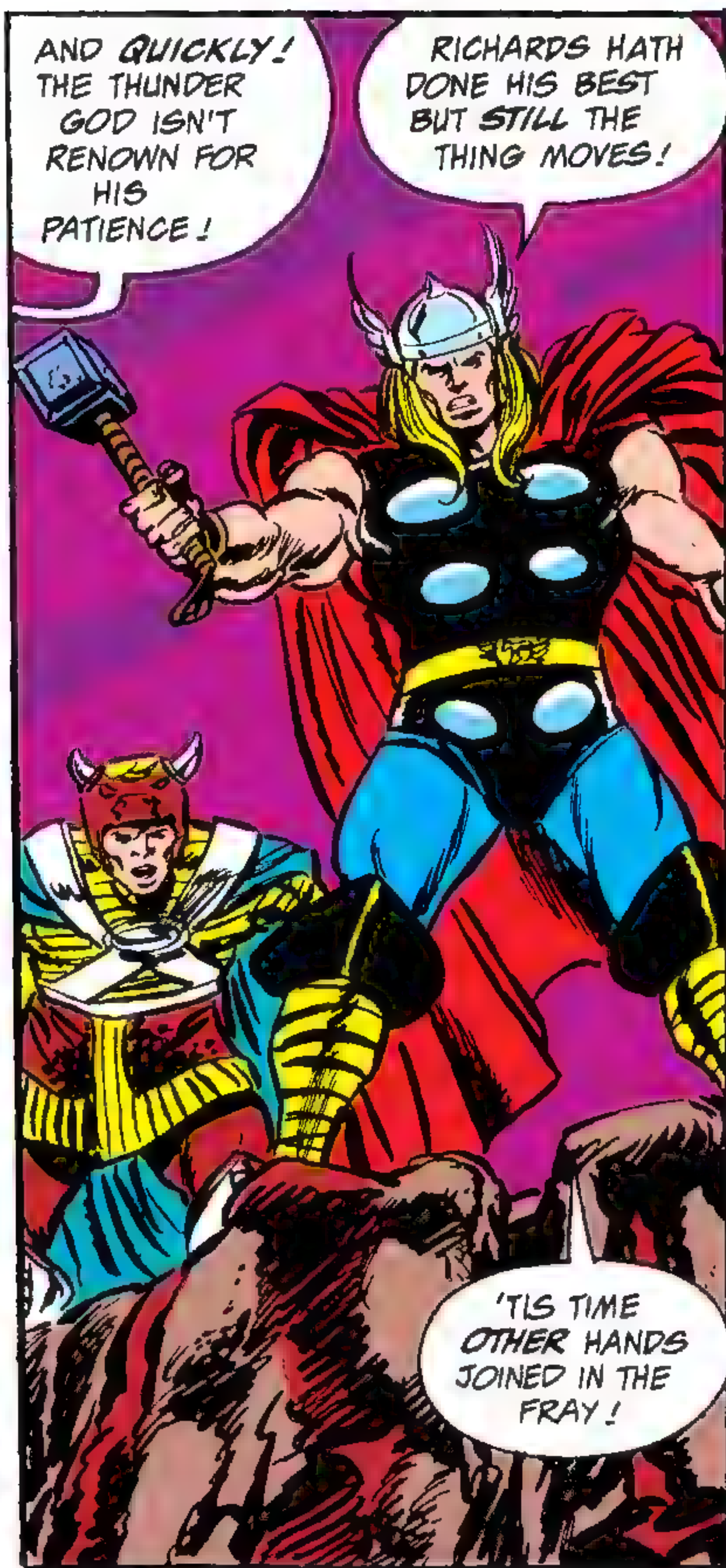
HE'S STUMBLING!
THE BLAST PENETRATED
HIS DEMONIZED
SKIN!

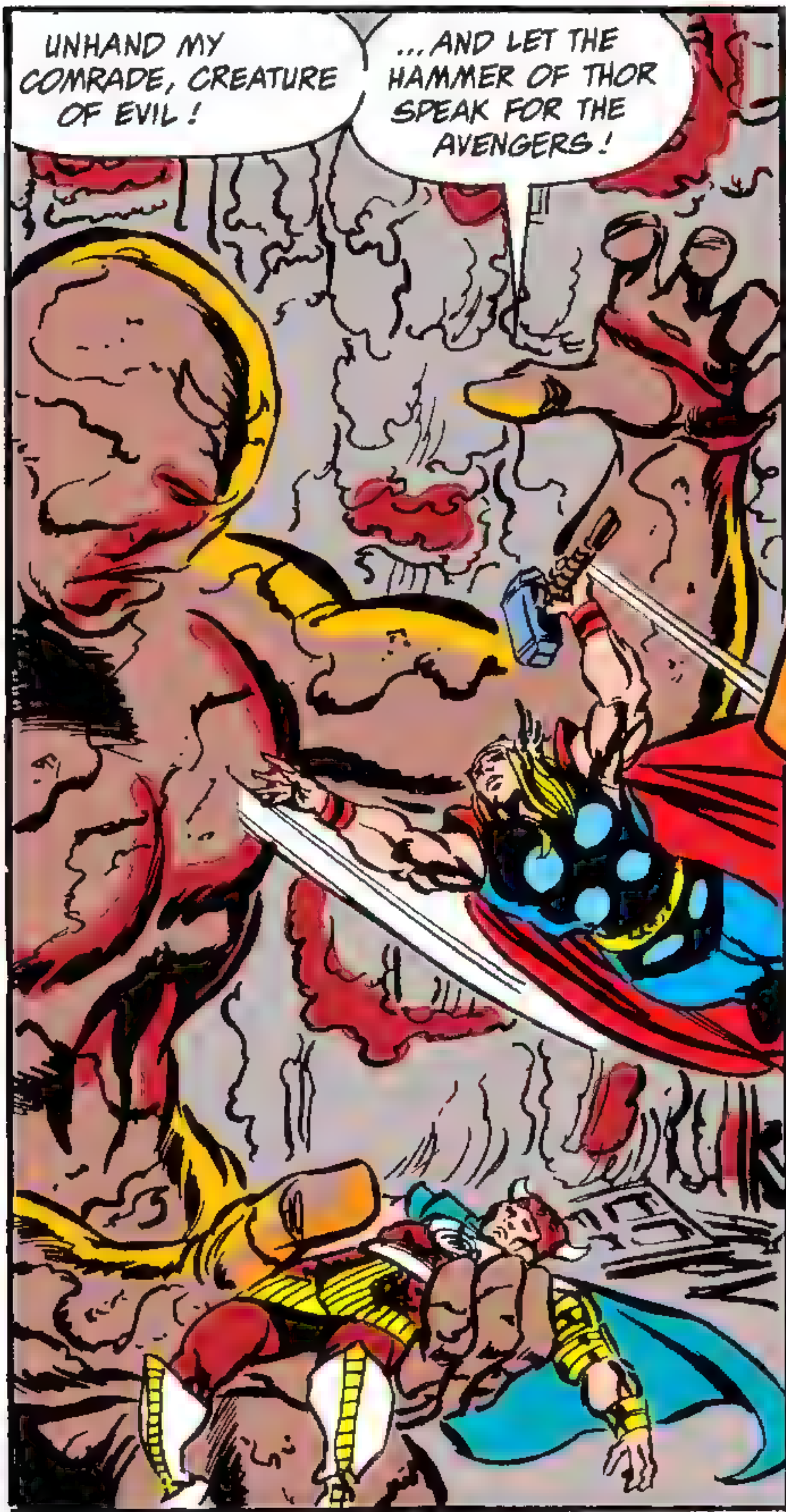
BUT HE'S
ALREADY
HEALING
OVER!

BEFORE THAT HAPPENS, I'VE
GOT TO REORGANIZE ENOUGH OF
HIS BODILY STRUCTURE TO GIVE
THOR AND GILGAMESH A
FIGHTING CHANCE!

BEEYOOOW!

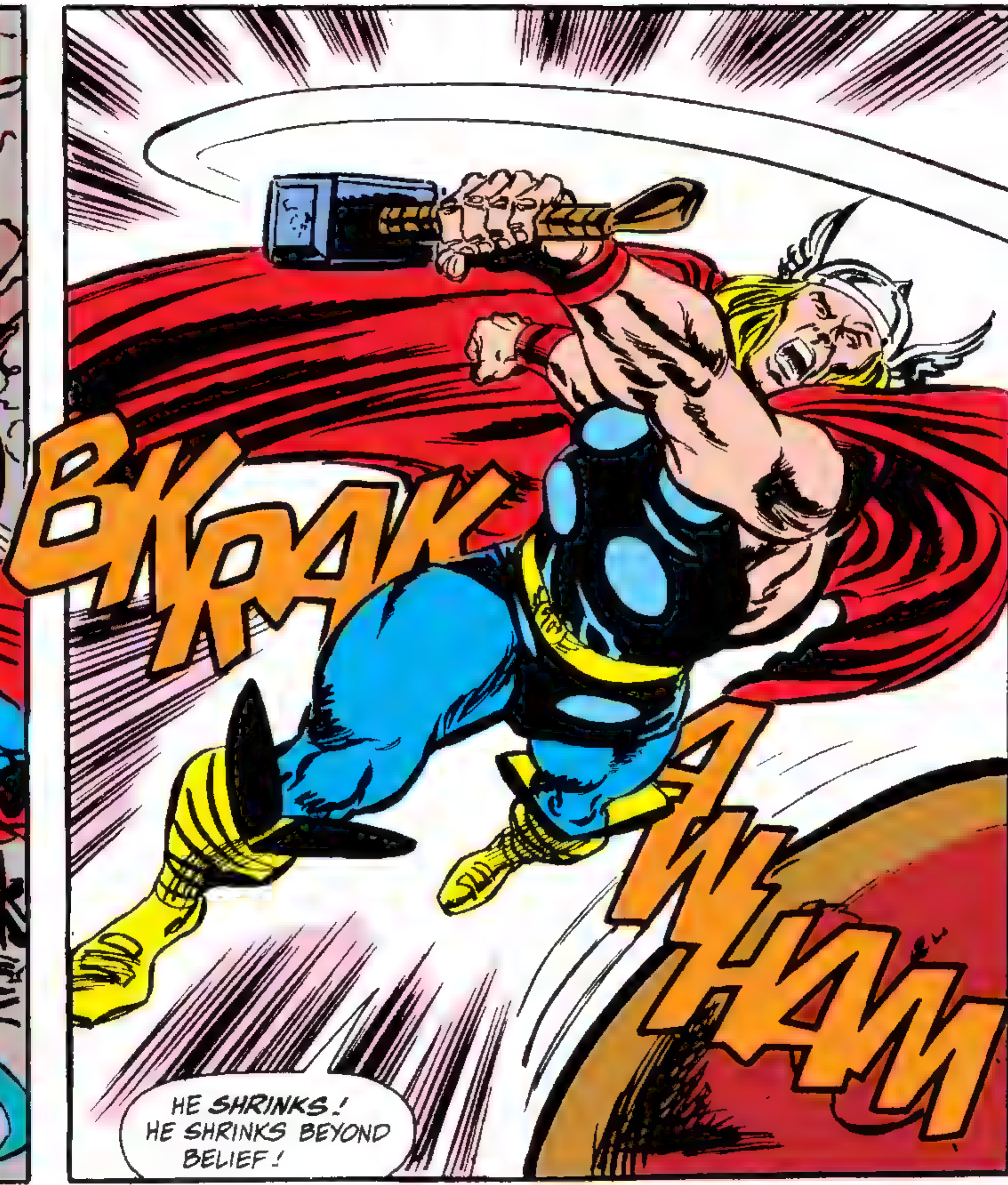
ARROOUGH!
<CLICK! KLIK!>





UNHAND MY COMRADE, CREATURE OF EVIL!

...AND LET THE HAMMER OF THOR SPEAK FOR THE AVENGERS!



BKRAK

WAAH

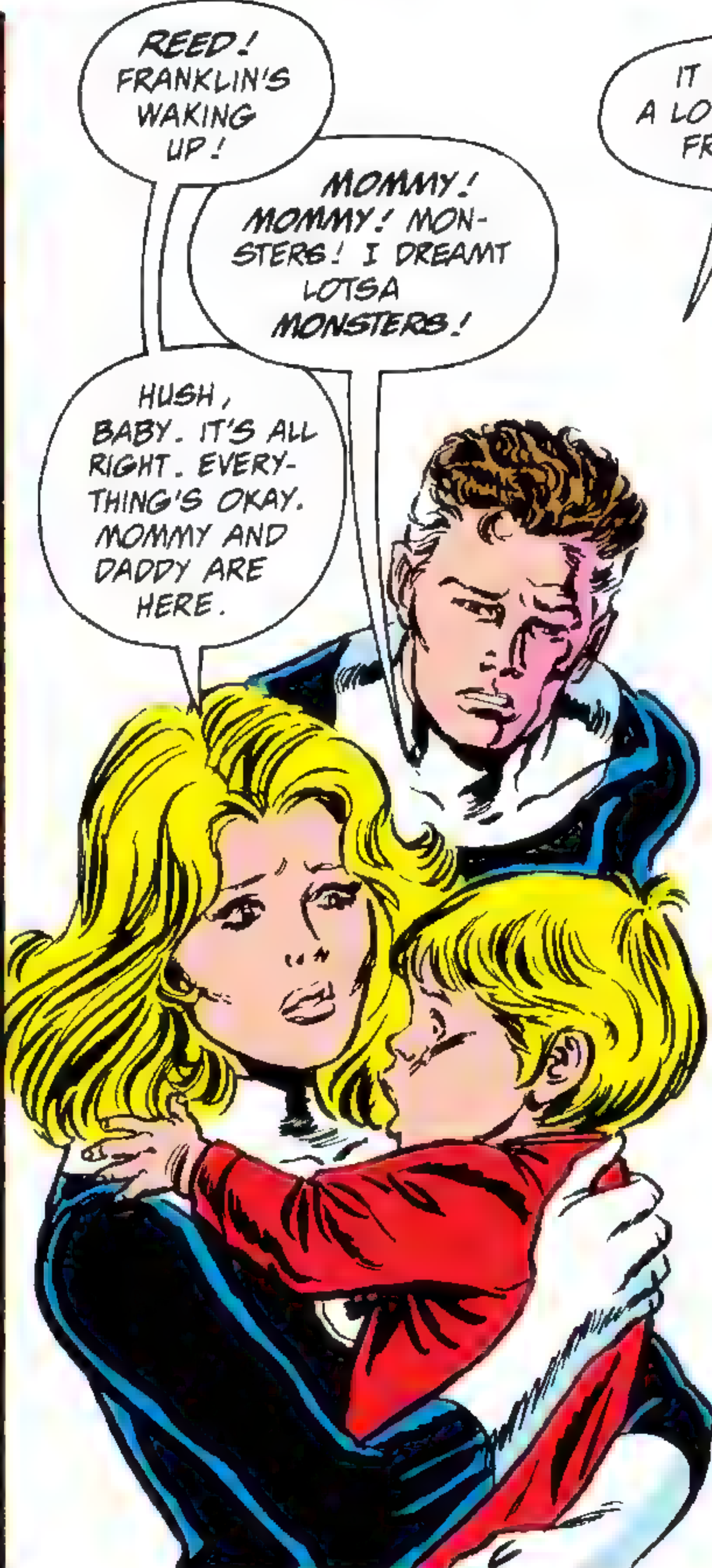
HE SHRINKS!
HE SHRINKS BEYOND BELIEF!



AGAIN I MUST STRIKE WITH ALL MY MIGHT!

LOOK OUT!
THE THING DOTH VANISH!

THE MONSTER IS REDUCED TO NOTHING! THE THREAT IS OVER!

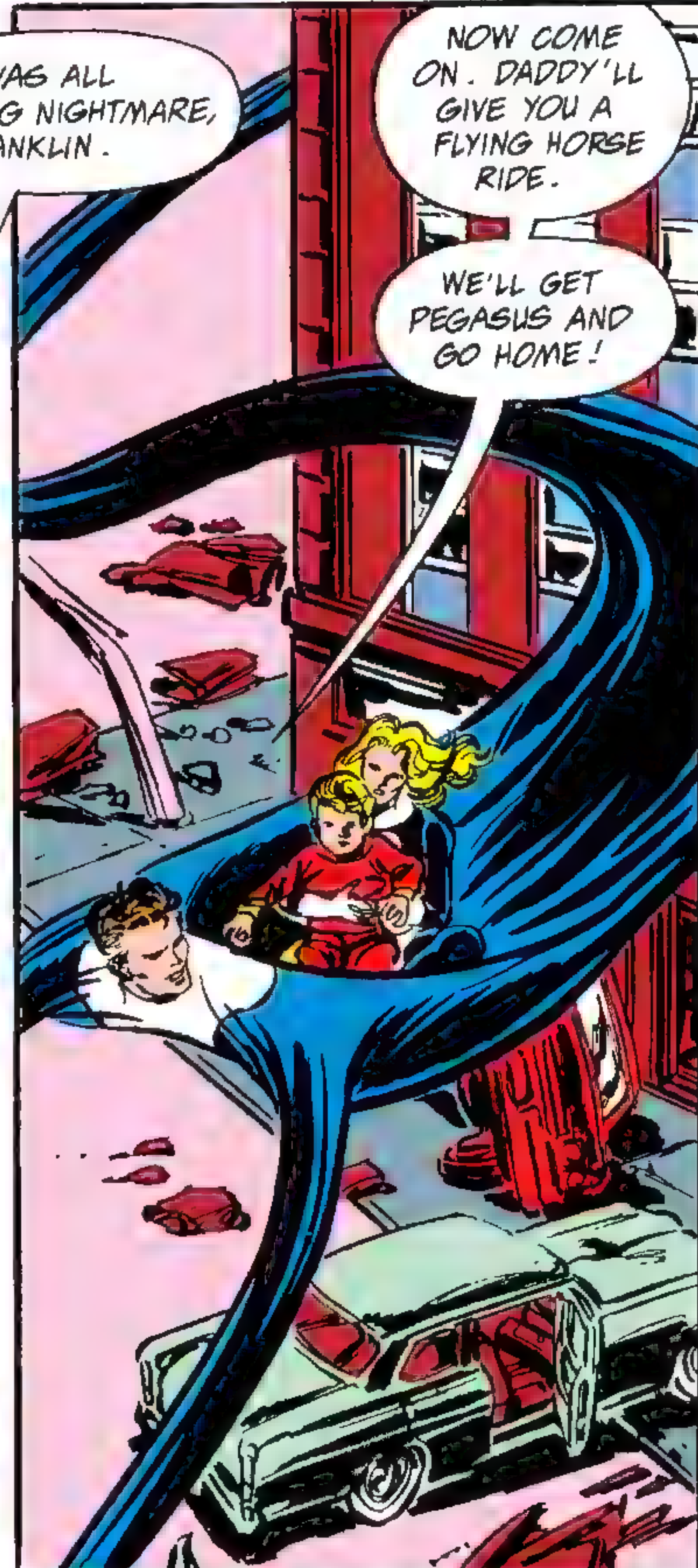


REED!
FRANKLIN'S WAKING UP!

MOMMY!
MOMMY! MONSTERS! I DREAMT LOTSA MONSTERS!

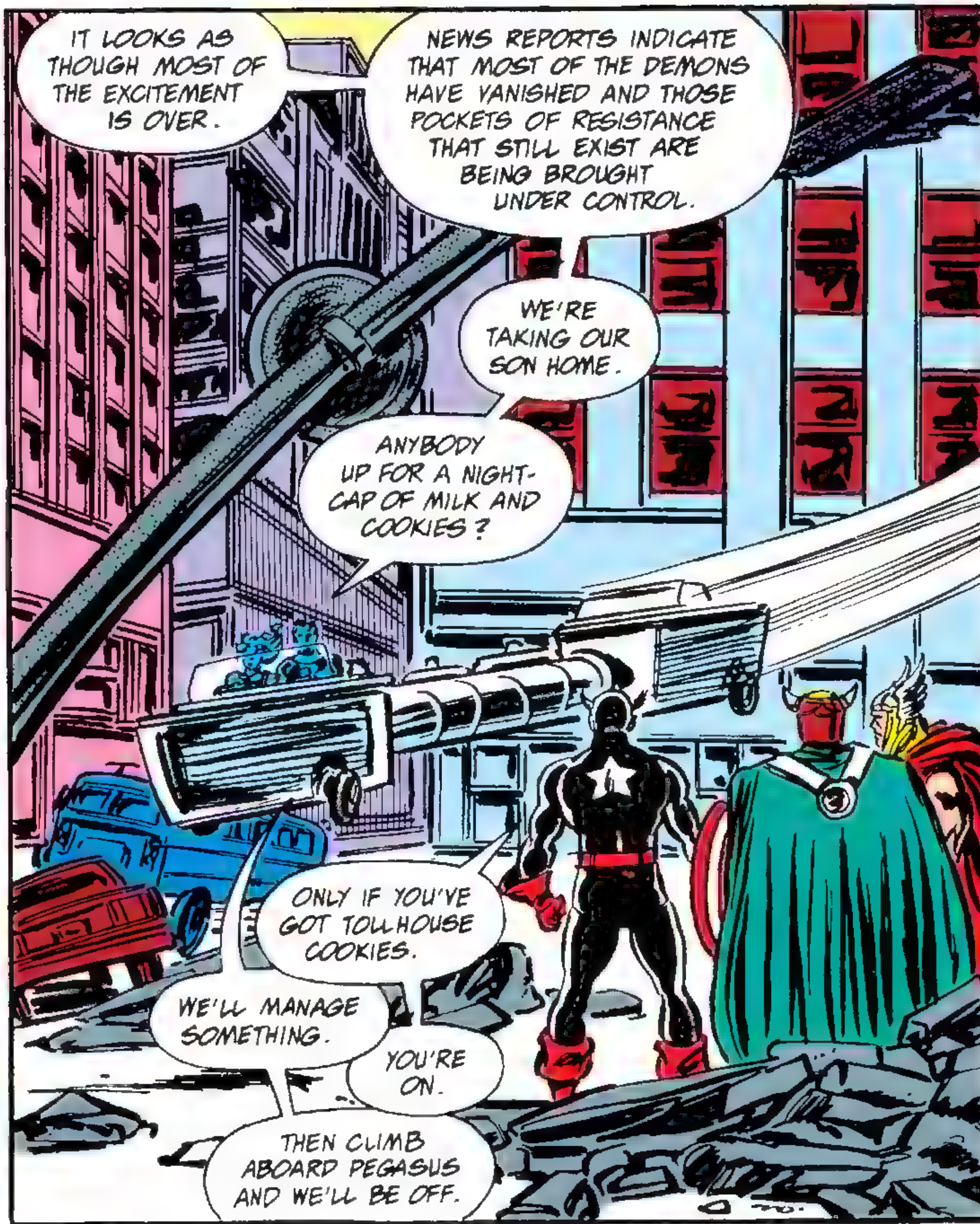
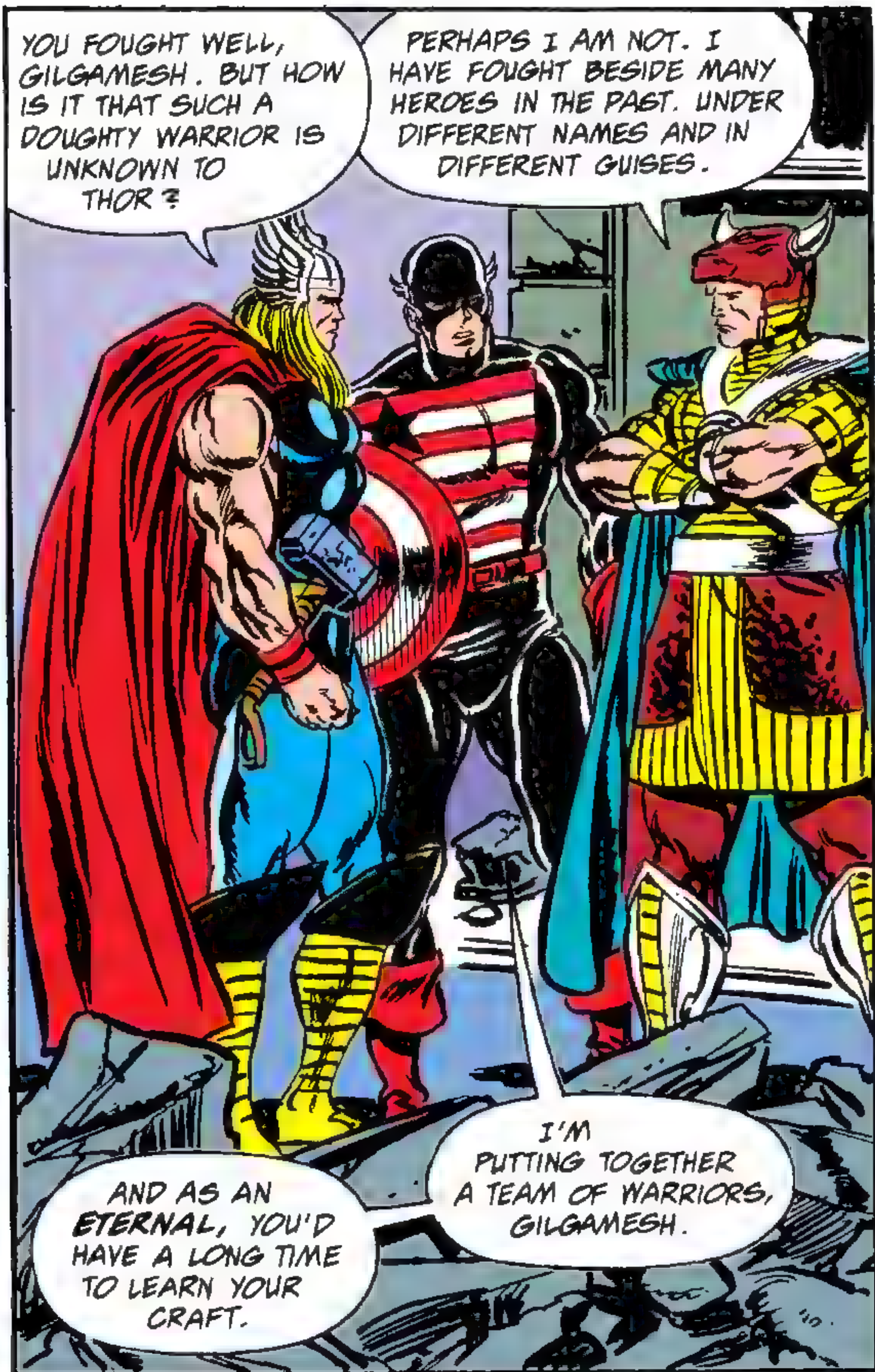
HUSH, BABY. IT'S ALL RIGHT. EVERYTHING'S OKAY. MOMMY AND DADDY ARE HERE.

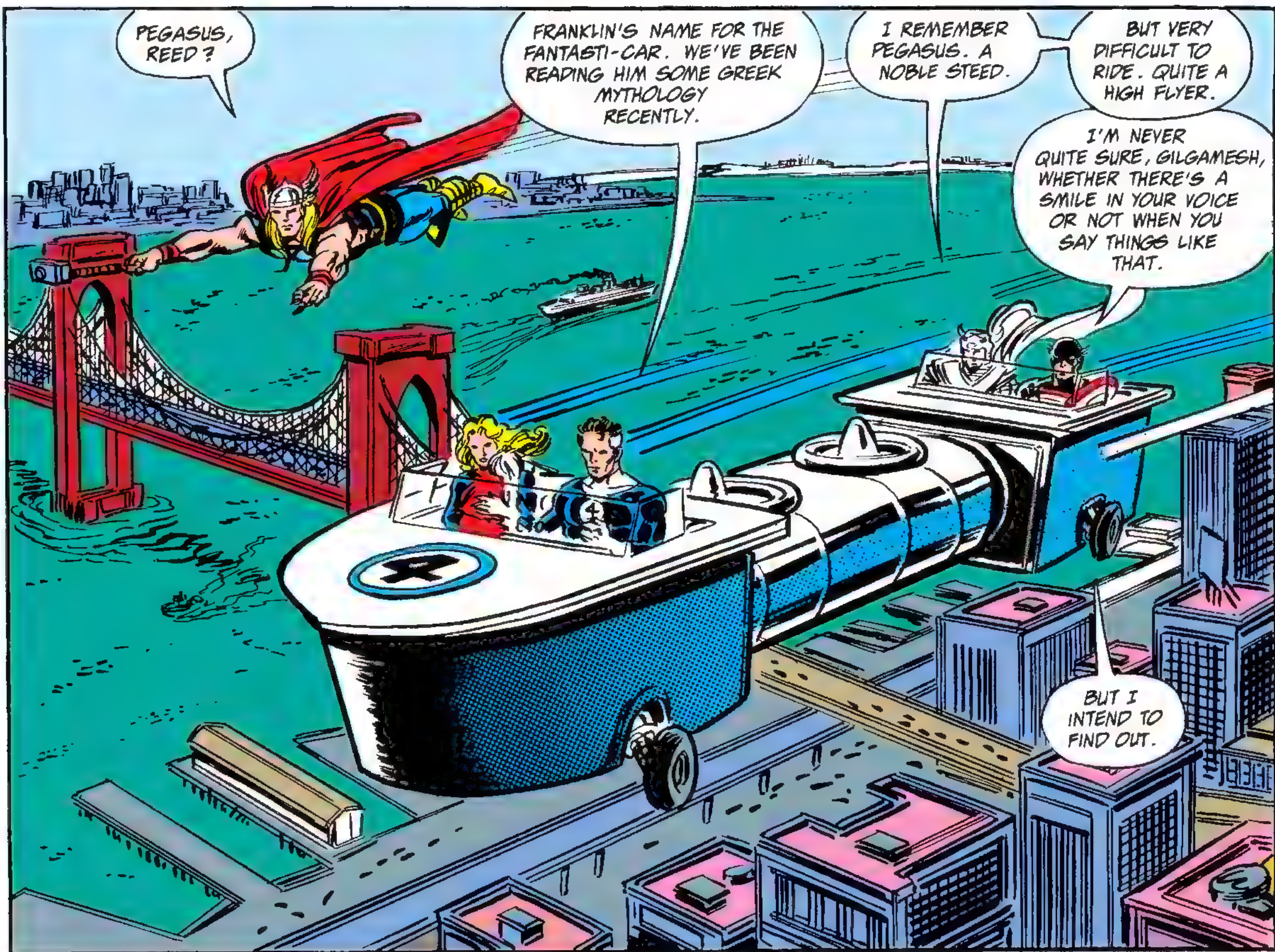
IT WAS ALL A LONG NIGHTMARE, FRANKLIN.



NOW COME ON. DADDY'LL GIVE YOU A FLYING HORSE RIDE.

WE'LL GET PEGASUS AND GO HOME!





PEGASUS, REED?

FRANKLIN'S NAME FOR THE FANTASTI-CAR. WE'VE BEEN READING HIM SOME GREEK MYTHOLOGY RECENTLY.

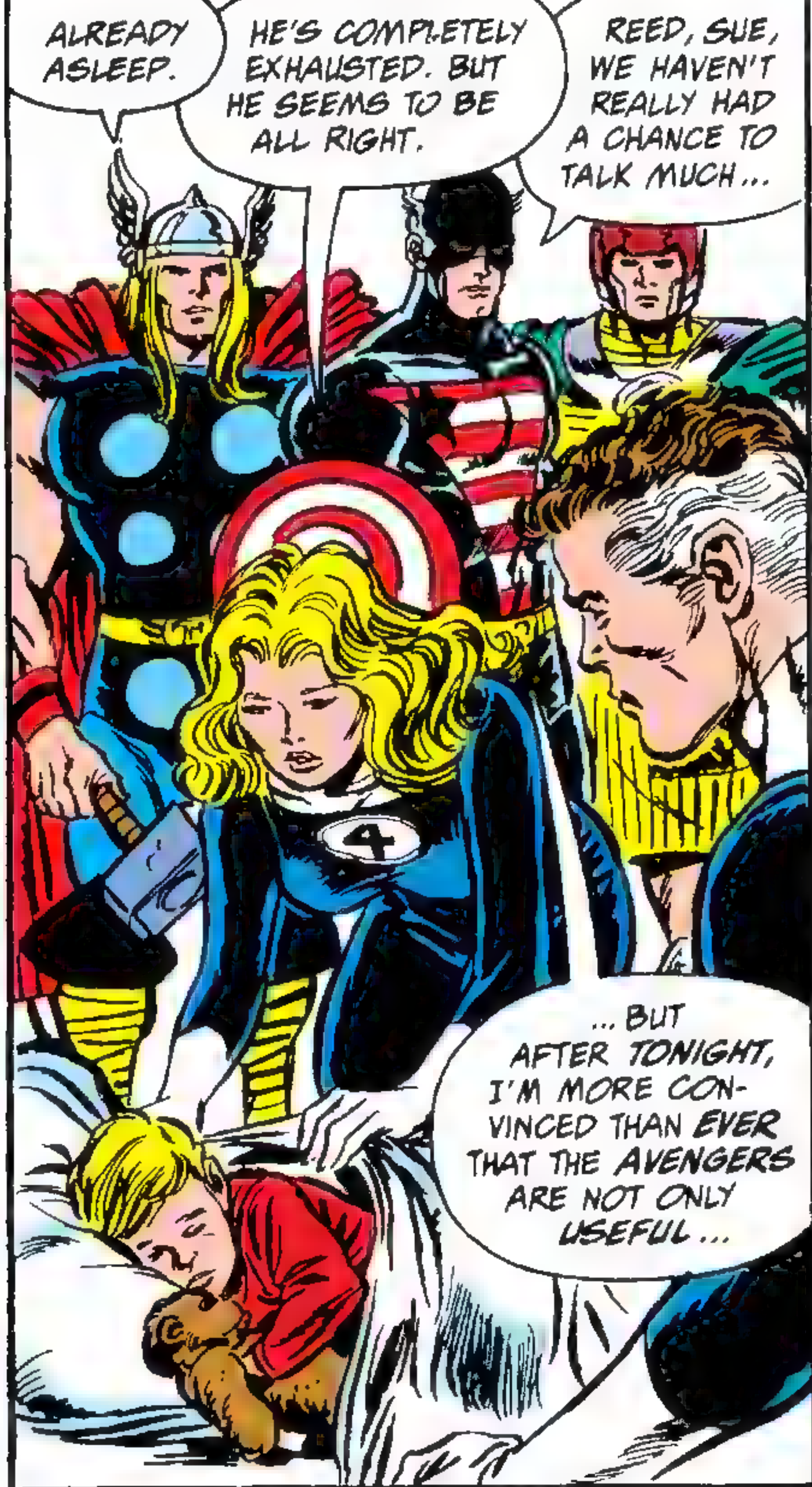
I REMEMBER PEGASUS. A NOBLE STEED.

BUT VERY DIFFICULT TO RIDE. QUITE A HIGH FLYER.

I'M NEVER QUITE SURE, GILGAMESH, WHETHER THERE'S A SMILE IN YOUR VOICE OR NOT WHEN YOU SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.

BUT I INTEND TO FIND OUT.

AND SHORTLY, AT THE RICHARDS' HOME IN CONNECTICUT...

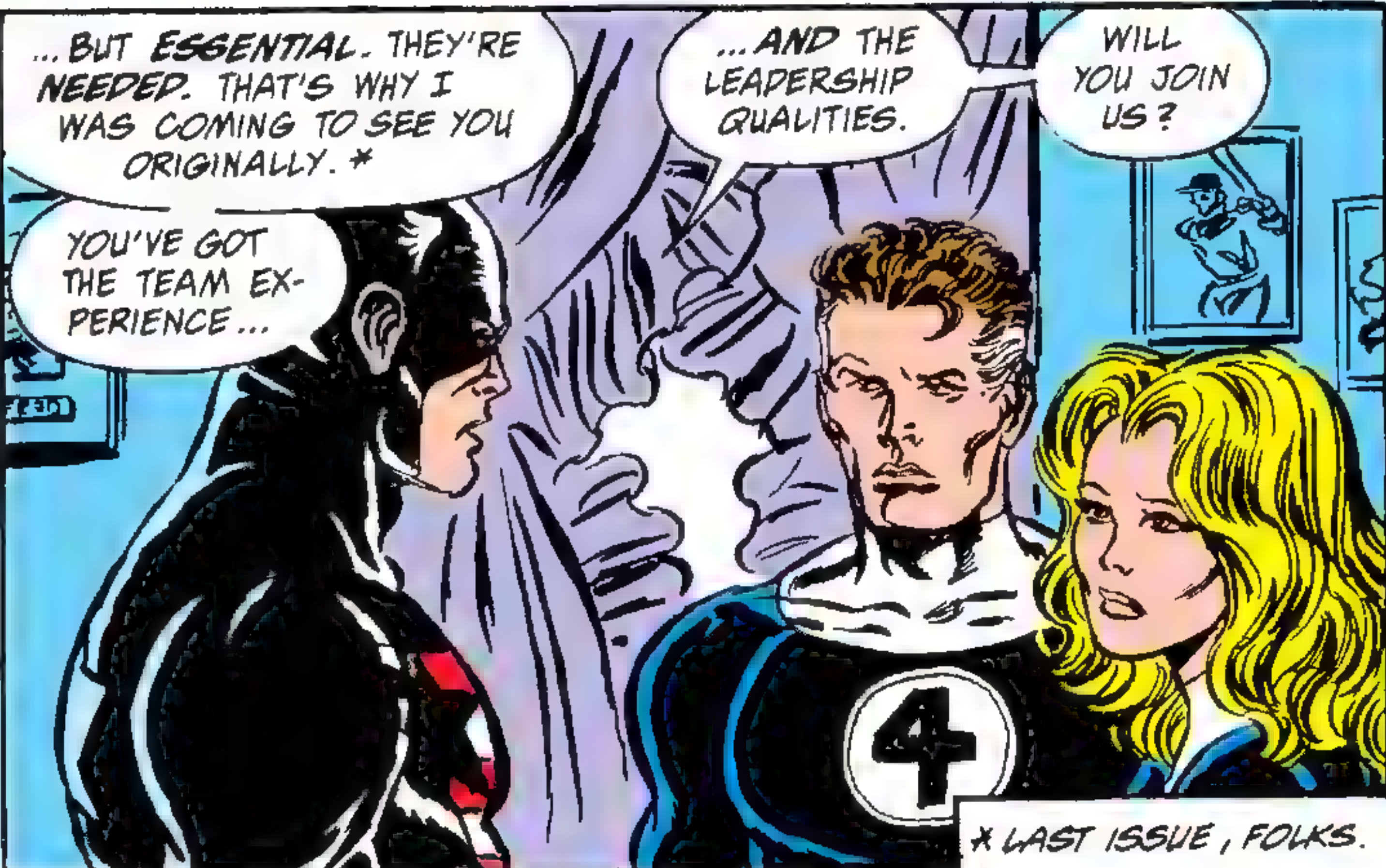


ALREADY ASLEEP.

HE'S COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED. BUT HE SEEMS TO BE ALL RIGHT.

REED, SUE, WE HAVEN'T REALLY HAD A CHANCE TO TALK MUCH...

... BUT AFTER TONIGHT, I'M MORE CONVINCED THAN EVER THAT THE AVENGERS ARE NOT ONLY USEFUL...



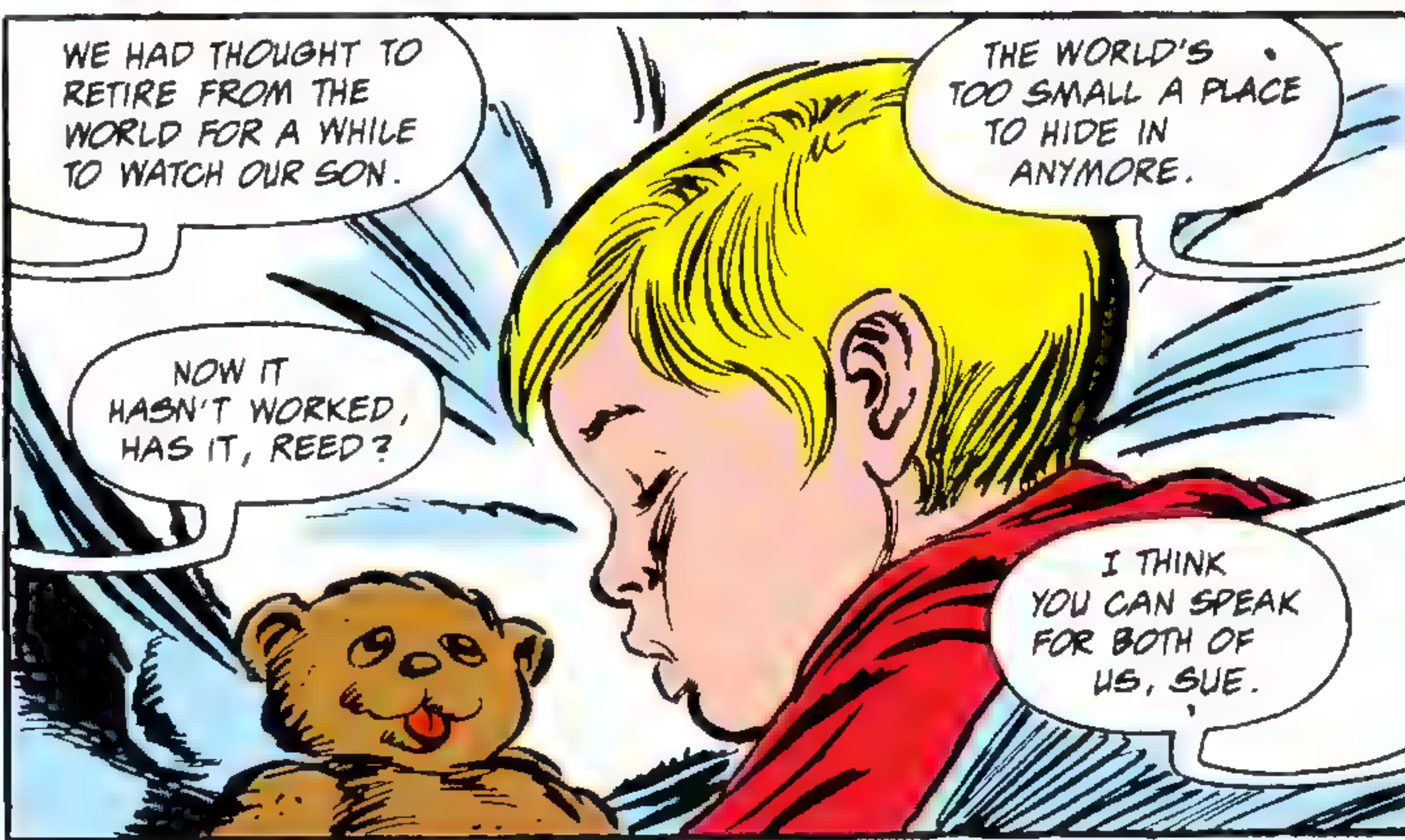
... BUT ESSENTIAL. THEY'RE NEEDED. THAT'S WHY I WAS COMING TO SEE YOU ORIGINALLY. *

YOU'VE GOT THE TEAM EXPERIENCE...

... AND THE LEADERSHIP QUALITIES.

WILL YOU JOIN US?

* LAST ISSUE, FOLKS.



WE HAD THOUGHT TO RETIRE FROM THE WORLD FOR A WHILE TO WATCH OUR SON.

NOW IT HASN'T WORKED, HAS IT, REED?

THE WORLD'S TOO SMALL A PLACE TO HIDE IN ANYMORE.

I THINK YOU CAN SPEAK FOR BOTH OF US, SUE.

FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILD, AND THE WORLD'S SAFETY, OUR ANSWER IS YES.

WE DON'T HAVE TO RAISE OUR VOICES, HONEY.

THE HELPLESS WILL SOON KNOW THAT THE AVENGERS STAND READY TO AID THEM.

OUR BATTLE CRIES WILL SHAKE THE CITADELS OF OUR ENEMIES...

... AND THOSE WHO PRACTICE EVIL SHALL BE CAST DOWN BENEATH OUR HEELS!

BUT IF ANYBODY STARTS SHOUTING "AVENGERS ASSEMBLE" AND WAKES UP MY BABY, HE IS GOING TO BE IN BIG TROUBLE!

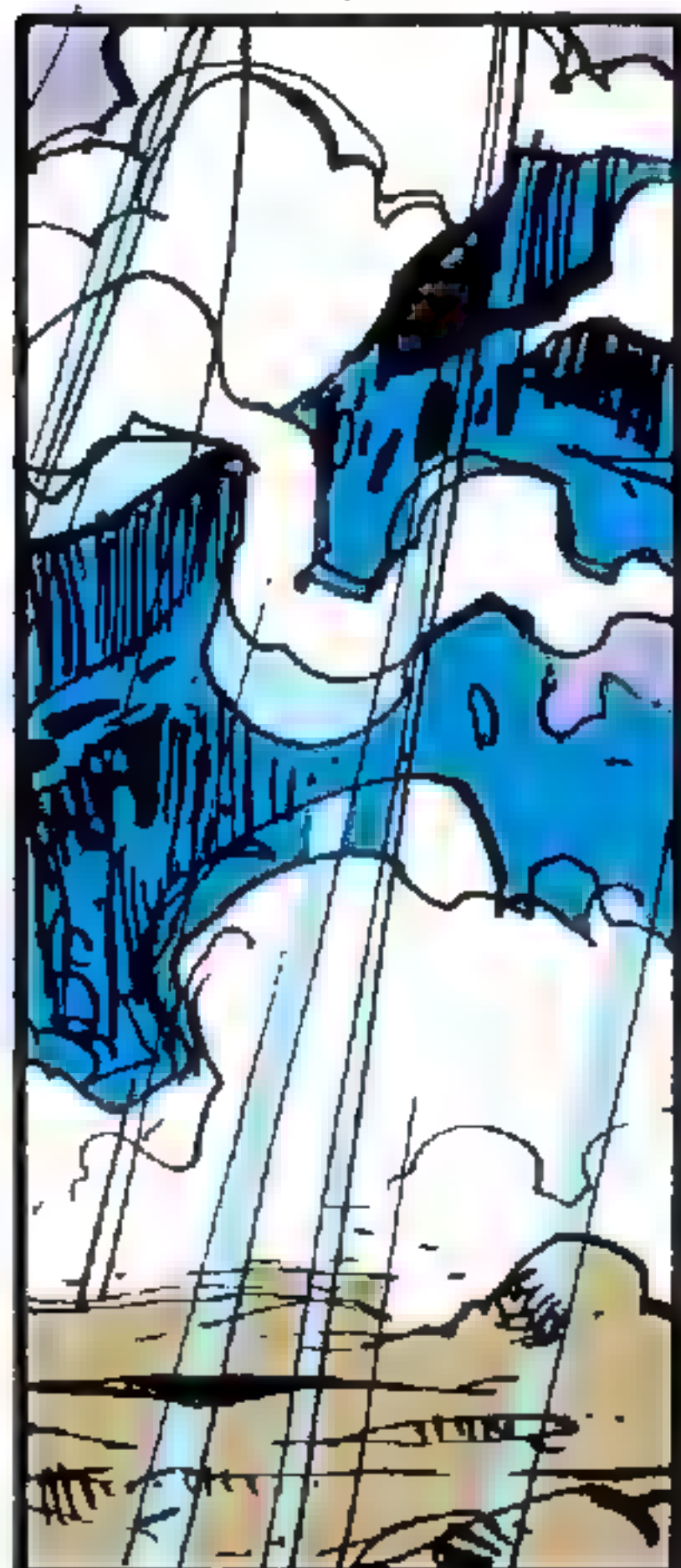


SO BE IT!

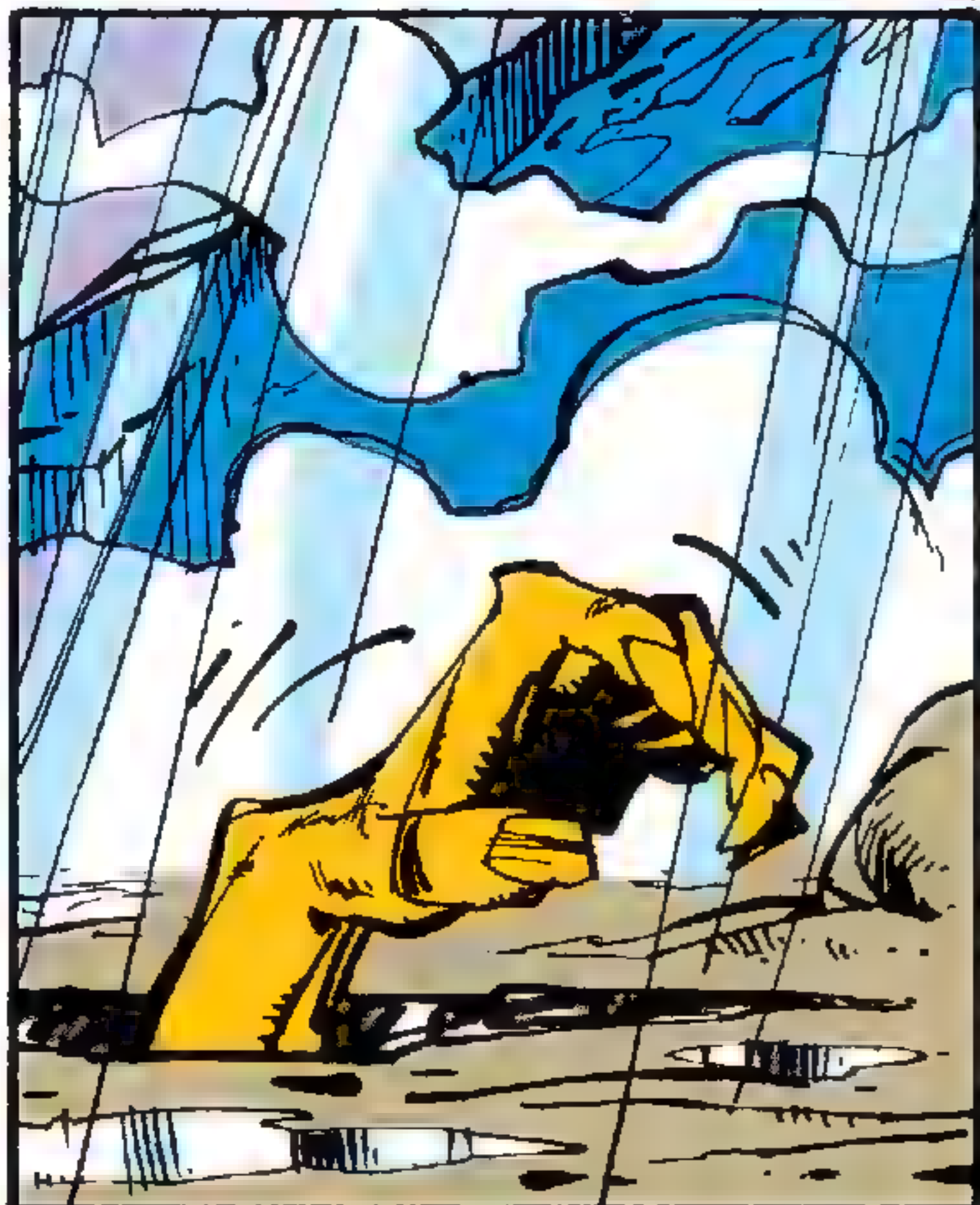
THEN... THE AVENGERS ARE REBORN!

FIN

"AND SO I AGAIN
UNDERTAKE THE
ARDUOUS ANNUAL
PILGRIMAGE TO
ASGARD'S
DREADED ISLE
OF SILENCE.



"FOR 'T WAS HERE I ONCE
SUFFERED IMPRISON-
MENT THROUGH WHIM OF
MY FOOLISH FATHER ODIN
FOR IMAGINED CRIMES
'GAINST THE REALM.



"'T WAS HERE, WITH
NONE TO AFFORD
ME COMPANY--SAVE
THE UNSPEAKING
TROLLS--THAT I
COMMITTED THE
MOST GRIEVOUS
ERROR THAT HAS
E'ER HAUNTED ME.

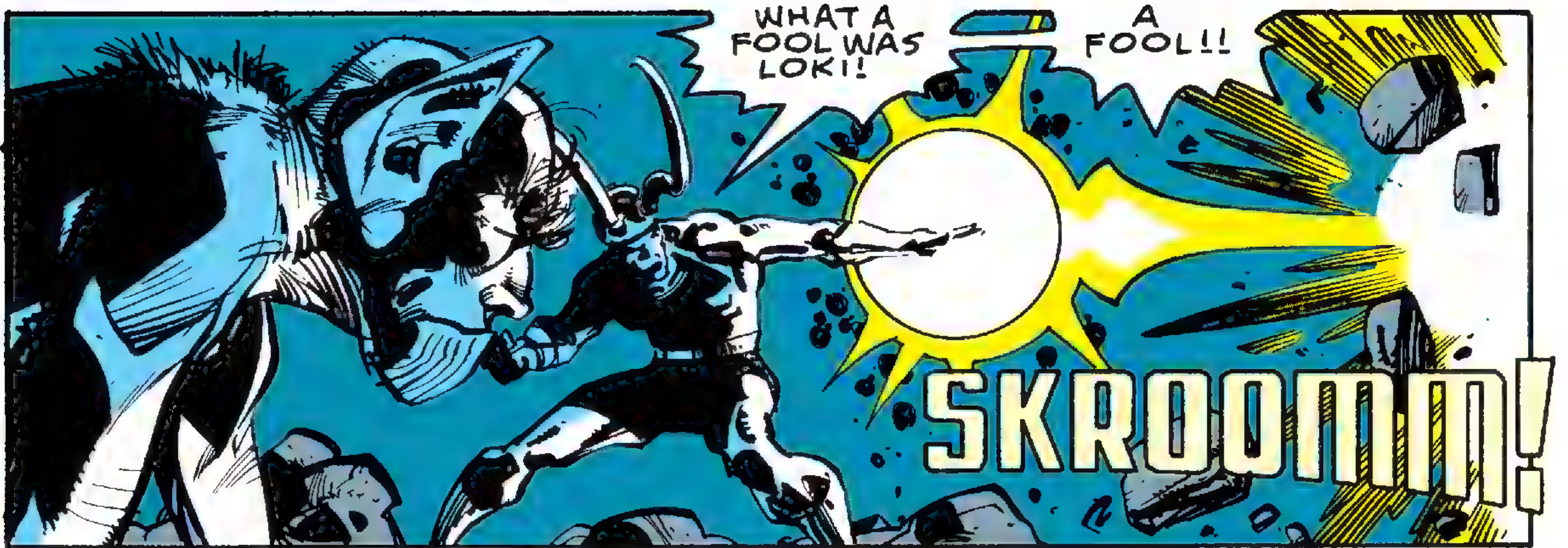


"'T WAS HERE
I WAS UN-
DONE BY
MINE OWN
SUBTLE
SCHEMES
AND THUS
BROUGHT
ABOUT--"

THE COMING OF THE ACCURSED AVENGERS!



RALPH
MACCHIO AND
WALT SIMONSON
STORY TELLERS
JOHNE E. WORKMAN, JR.
LETTERS
GREGORY WRIGHT
COLORS
MARK GRUENWALD
EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO
EDITOR IN
CHIEF



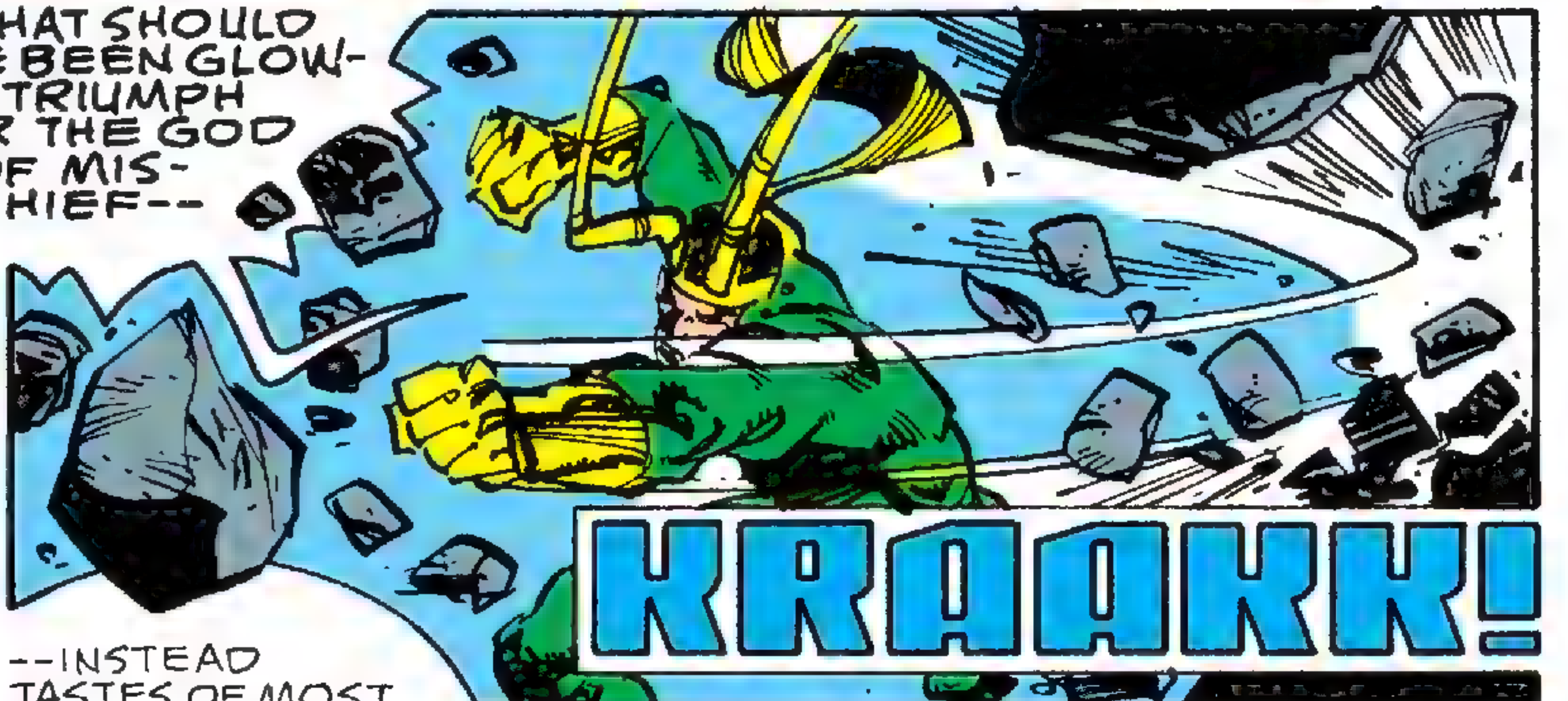
WHAT A FOOL WAS LOKI!!

A FOOL!!

SKROOMM!

HOW THE FATES HAVE TORMENTED ME FOR SUCH DISMAL FOLLY!

WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN GLOWING TRIUMPH FOR THE GOD OF MISCHIEF--



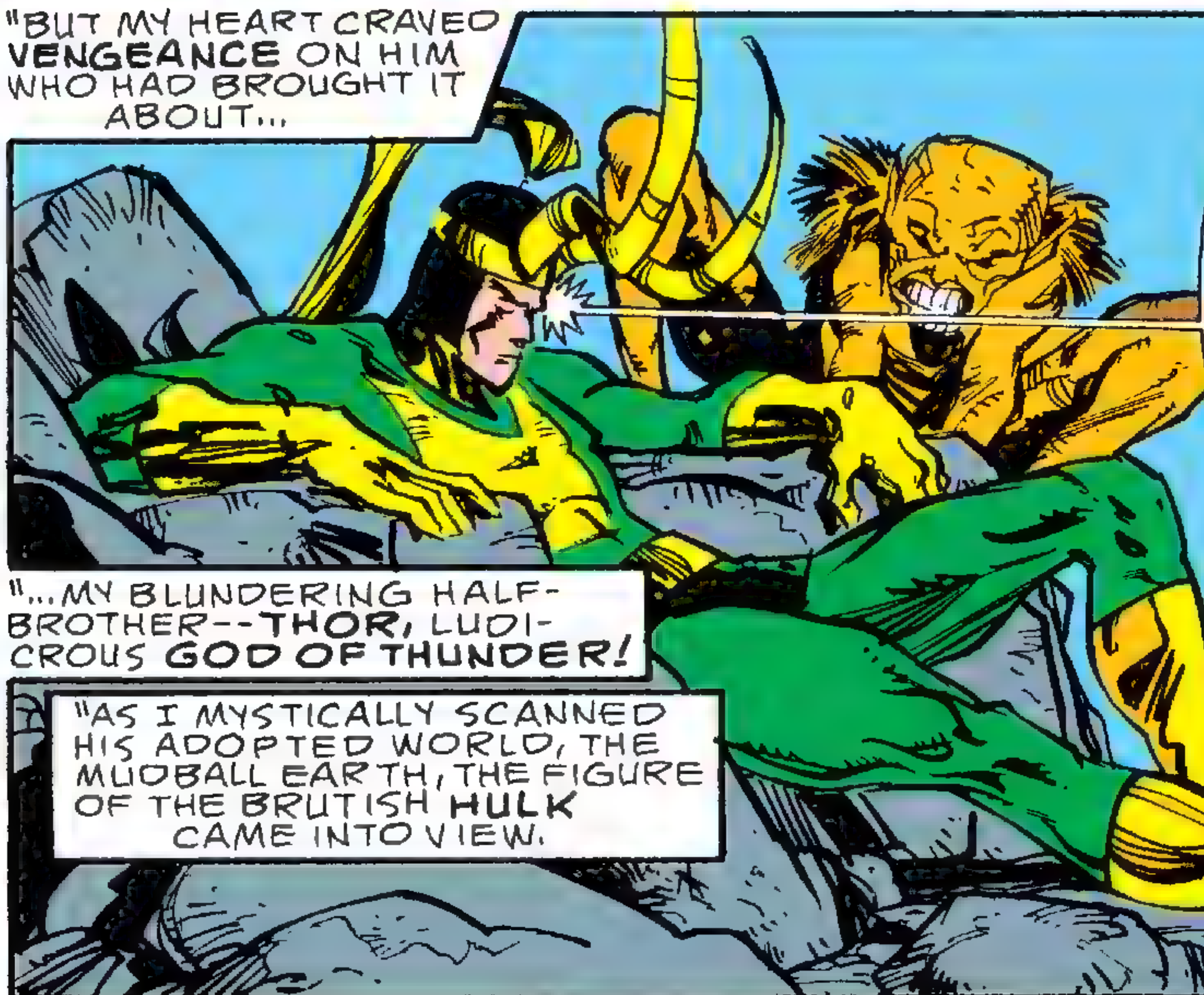
KRAAKK!

--INSTEAD TASTES OF MOST BITTER DEFEAT. THUS DO I RETURN TO THE ISLE OF SILENCE TO BROOD 'PON SUCH EVENTS THAT LED TO THE GENESIS OF THESE...

... "AVENGERS."

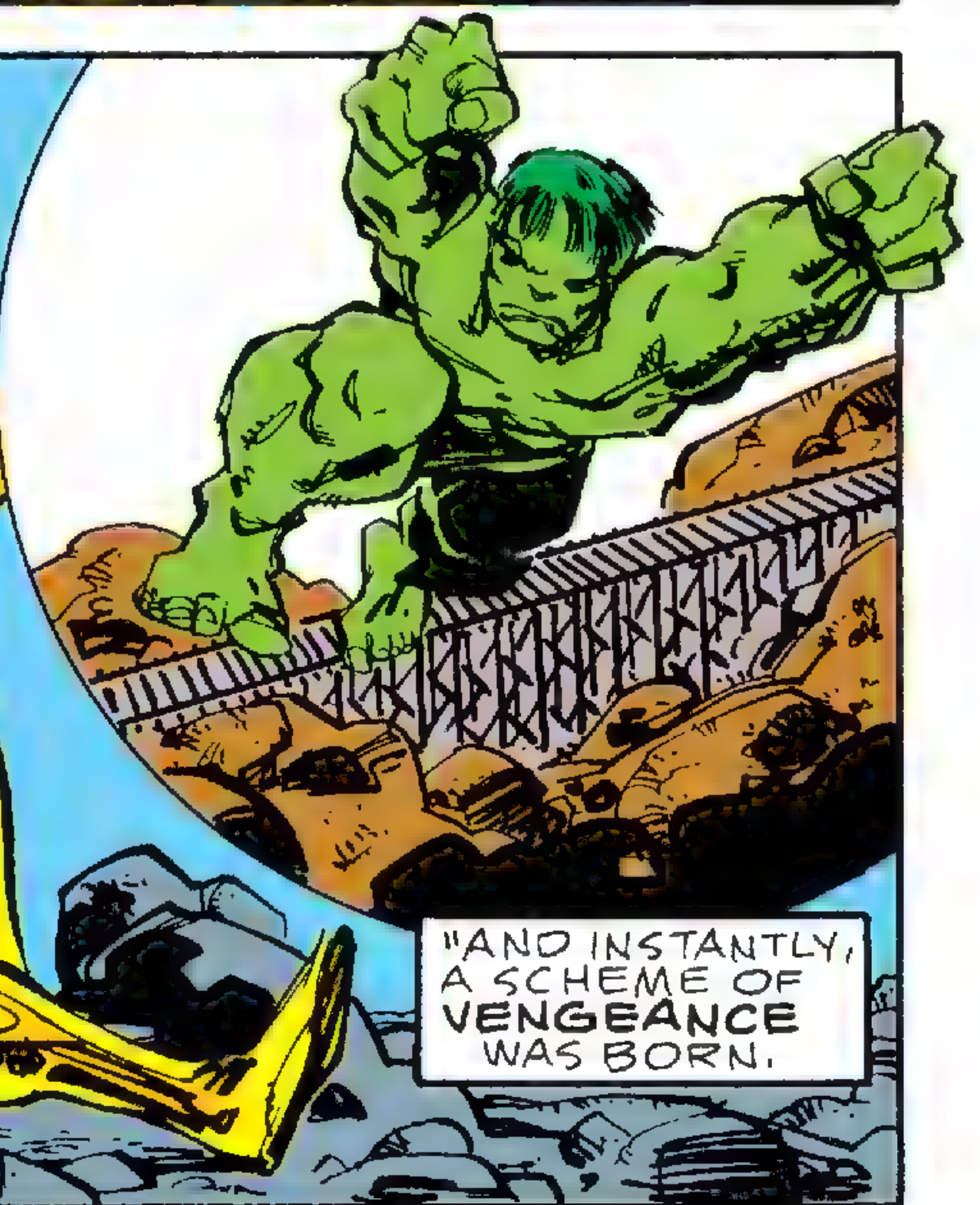
IT WAS BUT A MERE HEARTBEAT AGO AS IM-MORTALS RECKON TIME AND I HAD ACCEPTED MY EXILE FROM ASGARD.

"BUT MY HEART CRAVED VENGEANCE ON HIM WHO HAD BROUGHT IT ABOUT..."



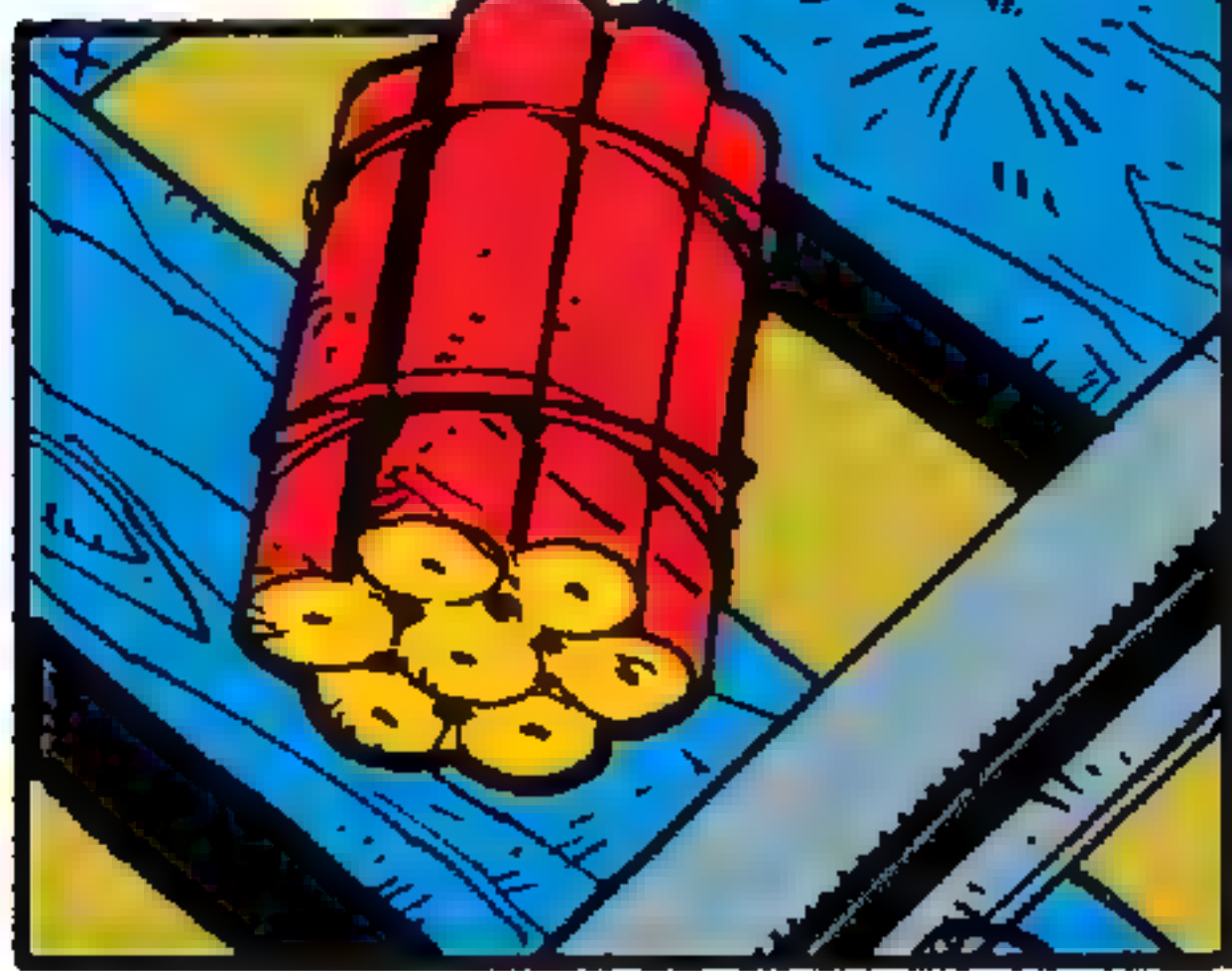
"...MY BLUNDERING HALF-BROTHER--THOR, LUDICROUS GOD OF THUNDER!"

"AS I MYSTICALLY SCANNED HIS ADOPTED WORLD, THE MUOBALL EARTH, THE FIGURE OF THE BRUTISH HULK CAME INTO VIEW."



"AND INSTANTLY, A SCHEME OF VENGEANCE WAS BORN."

"I PROJECTED A MENTAL IMAGE 'PON NEARBY RAILROAD TRACKS."



"THE DIM-WITTED HULK SPOTTED IT AS I KNEW HE WOULD."



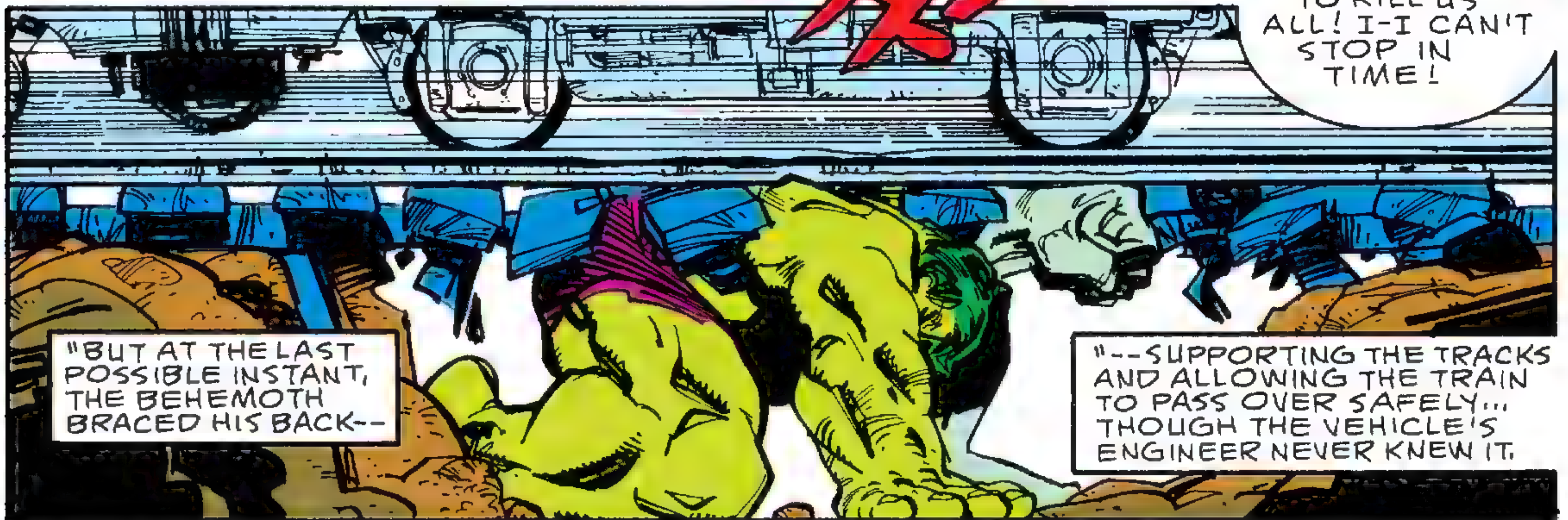
"HE HEARD THE APPROACH OF AN ONCOMING TRAIN AND ATTEMPTED TO SNUFF THE DYNAMITE BEFORE IT COULD EXPLODE."



"HIS PLUNGE DAMAGED THE TRESTDLE AND THE MULTI-WHEELED CONVEYANCE HEADED FOR ALMOST CERTAIN DOOM."



HE'S TRYING TO KILL US ALL! I-I CAN'T STOP IN TIME!



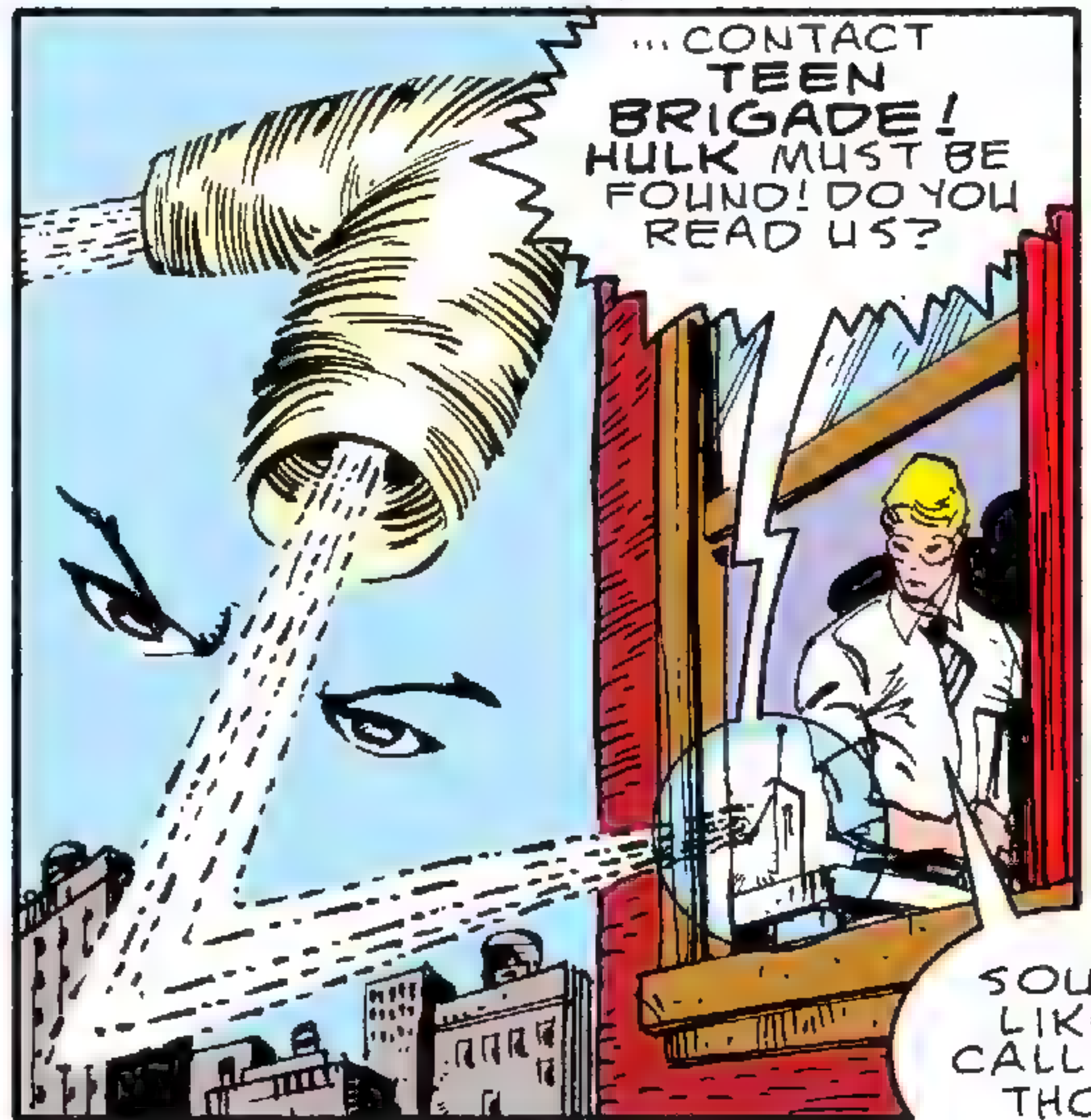
"BUT AT THE LAST POSSIBLE INSTANT, THE BEHEMOTH BRACED HIS BACK--"

"--SUPPORTING THE TRACKS AND ALLOWING THE TRAIN TO PASS OVER SAFELY... THOUGH THE VEHICLE'S ENGINEER NEVER KNEW IT."

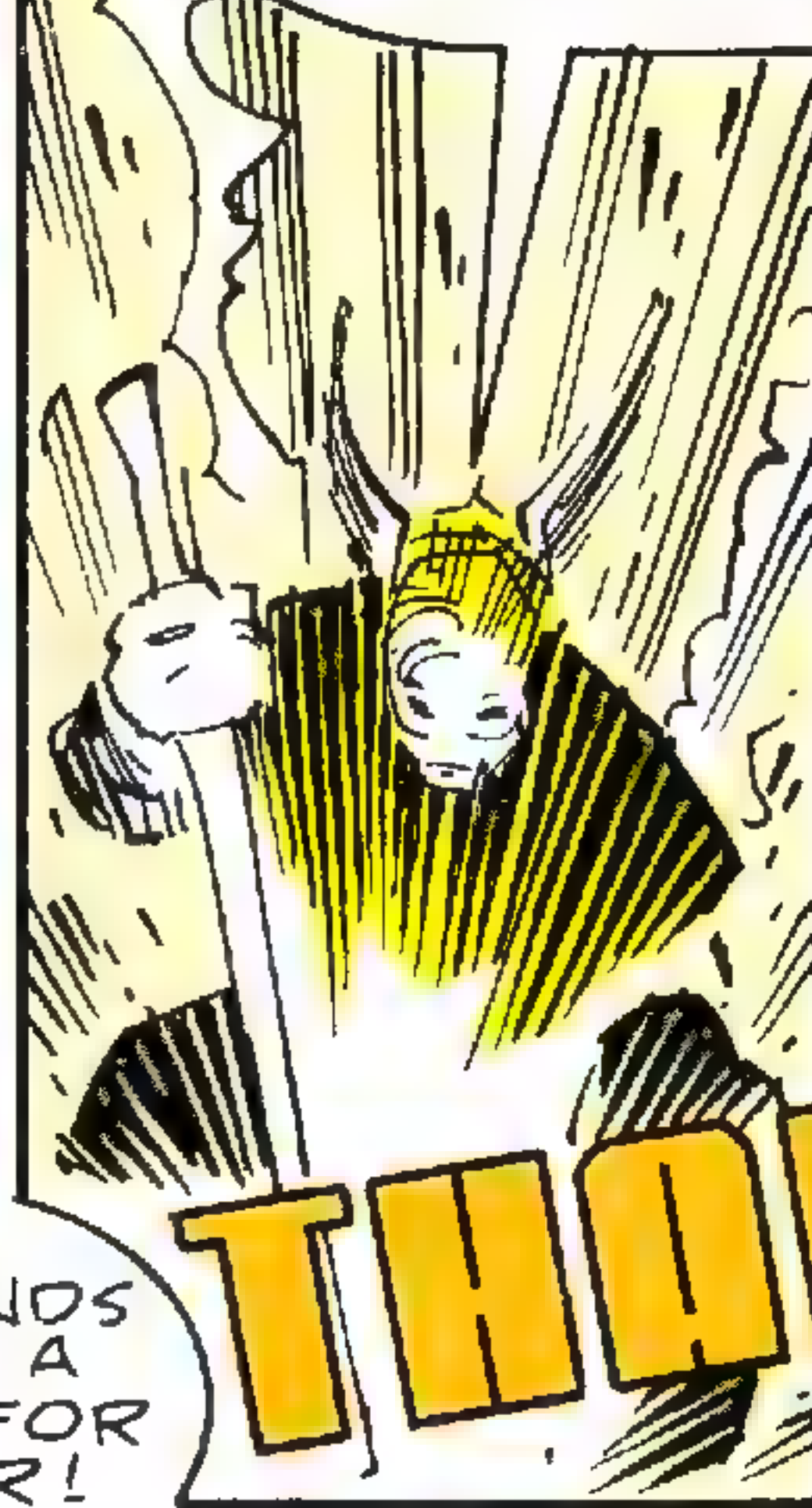
"THE HUMANS SOON SPREAD THE ALARM--AND RICK JONES, A MORTAL WHO HAD BEEN AT DR. BRUCE BANNER'S SIDE WHEN HE FIRST BECAME THE HULK, REACTED PREDICTABLY."



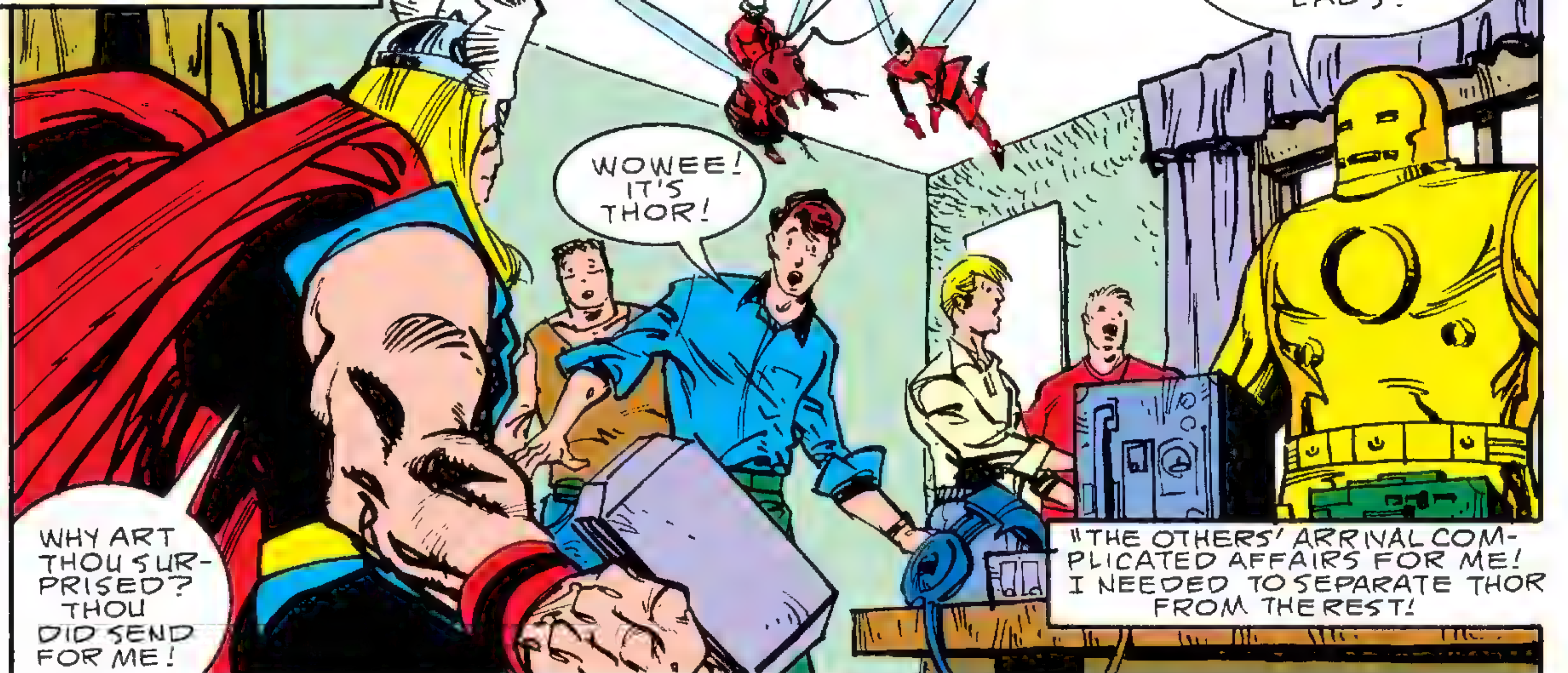
"I DIVERTED THE RADIO WAVES TO REACH ANOTHER'S EARS--MY HATED HALF-BROTHER IN HIS MORTAL GUISE AS DR. DONALD BLAKE."



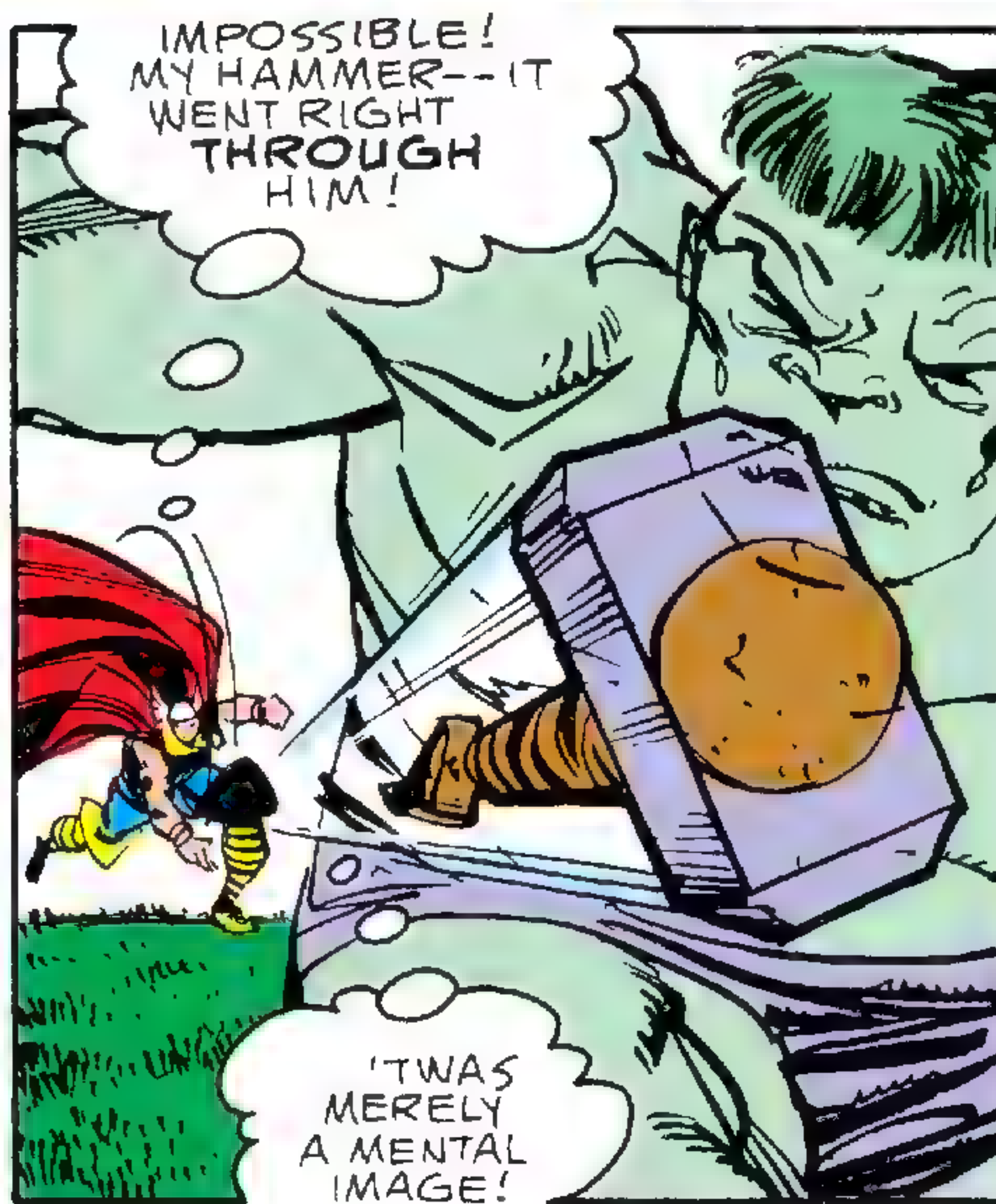
THE TEEN BRIGADE IS LOCATED IN THE SOUTH-WEST! IF THIS CONCERNS THE HULK, IT MUST BE SERIOUS! AND SO THE TIME HAS COME FOR--



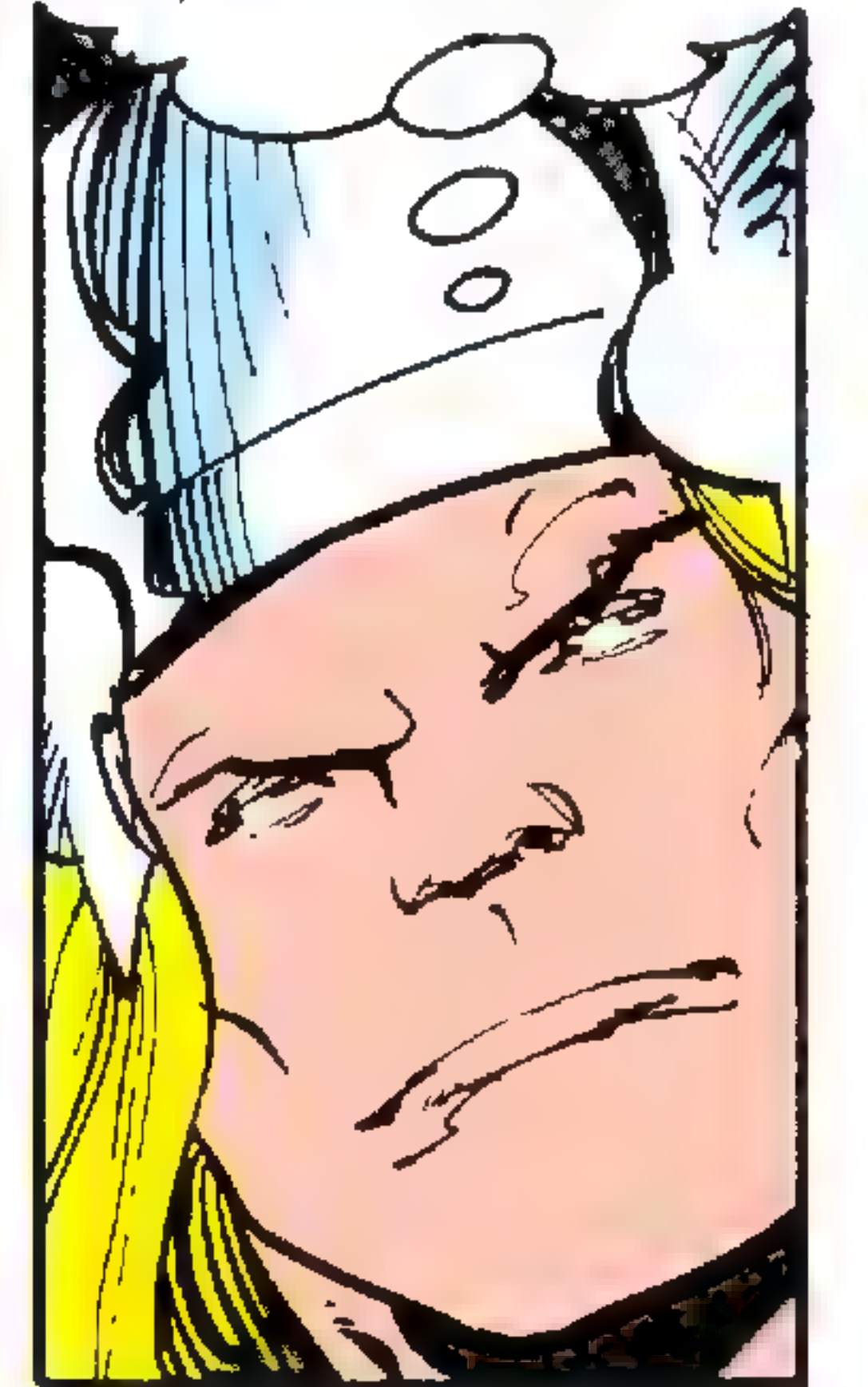
"OTHER SUPER-POWERED BUFFOONS ANSWERED THE SUMMONS, AS WELL."



"A SIMPLE ILLUSION CAST OF THE HULK! NO NEED TO DISTURB THE OTHERS!"



ONLY LOKI IS CAPABLE OF SUCH WIZARDRY! HE WAS WARNED NE'ER TO MEDDLE IN EARTHLY AFFAIRS!

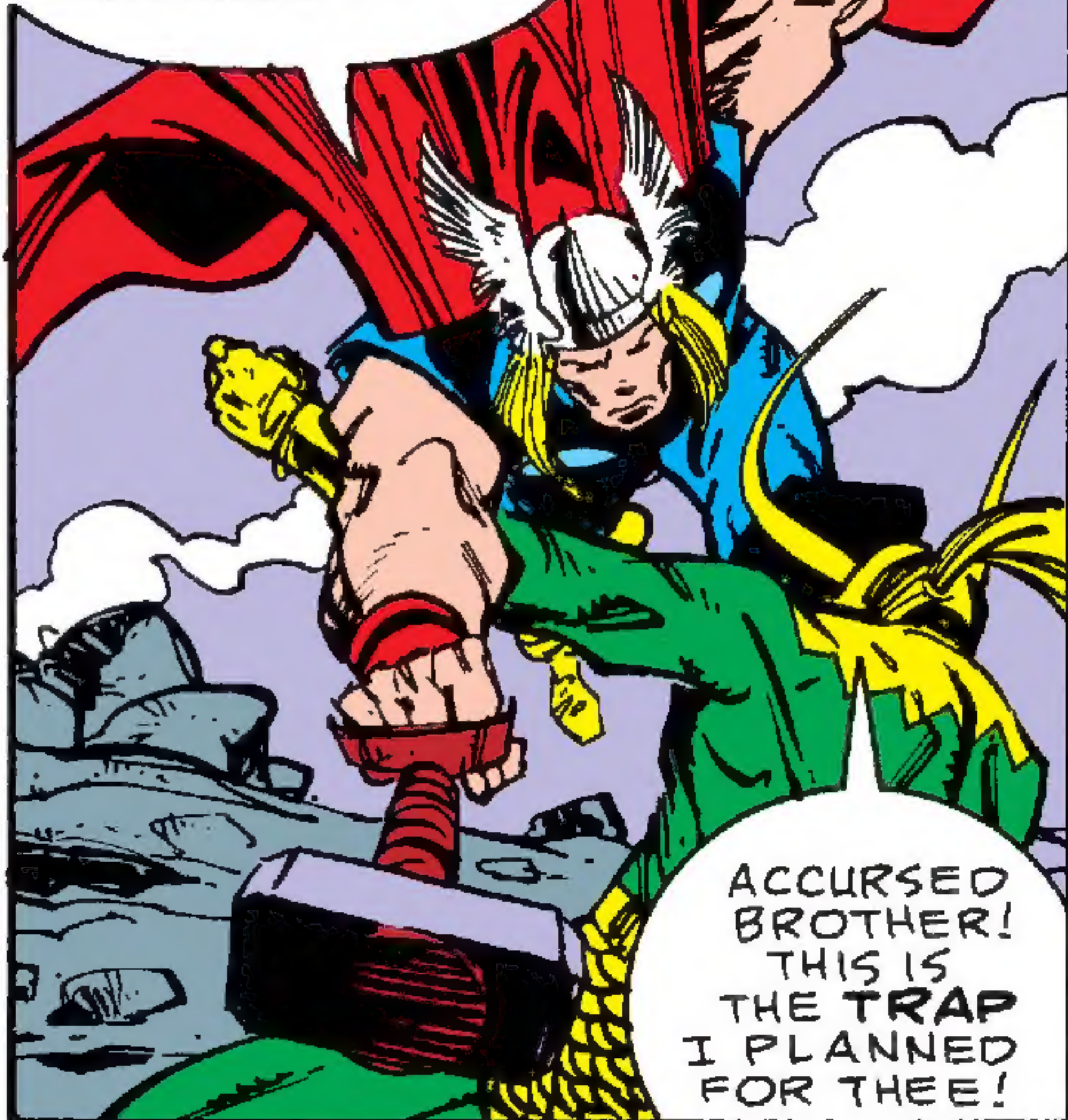


"THE FOOL TOOK THE BAIT
AND TRACKED ME TO THE
ISLE OF SILENCE.



NOTHING
CAN SAVE
THEE FROM
ME NOW,
PRINCE
OF EVIL!

THOU WERT EX-
PECTING ME, LOKI!
THAT MEANS THOU
HAST COMMITTED
SOME FOUL DEED,
KNOWING I WOULD
COME TO
AVENGE IT!



AND
AVENGE
IT I
SHALL!

ACCURSED
BROTHER!
THIS IS
THE TRAP
I PLANNED
FOR THEE!

THE TRAP THOU
CANST NOT
ESCAPE!



BELOW THIS ISLE
LIVE THE TROLLS!
AND NOTHING
THAT LIVES CAN
BREAK THEIR
GRIP!

I PROMISED
THEE TO
THEM!



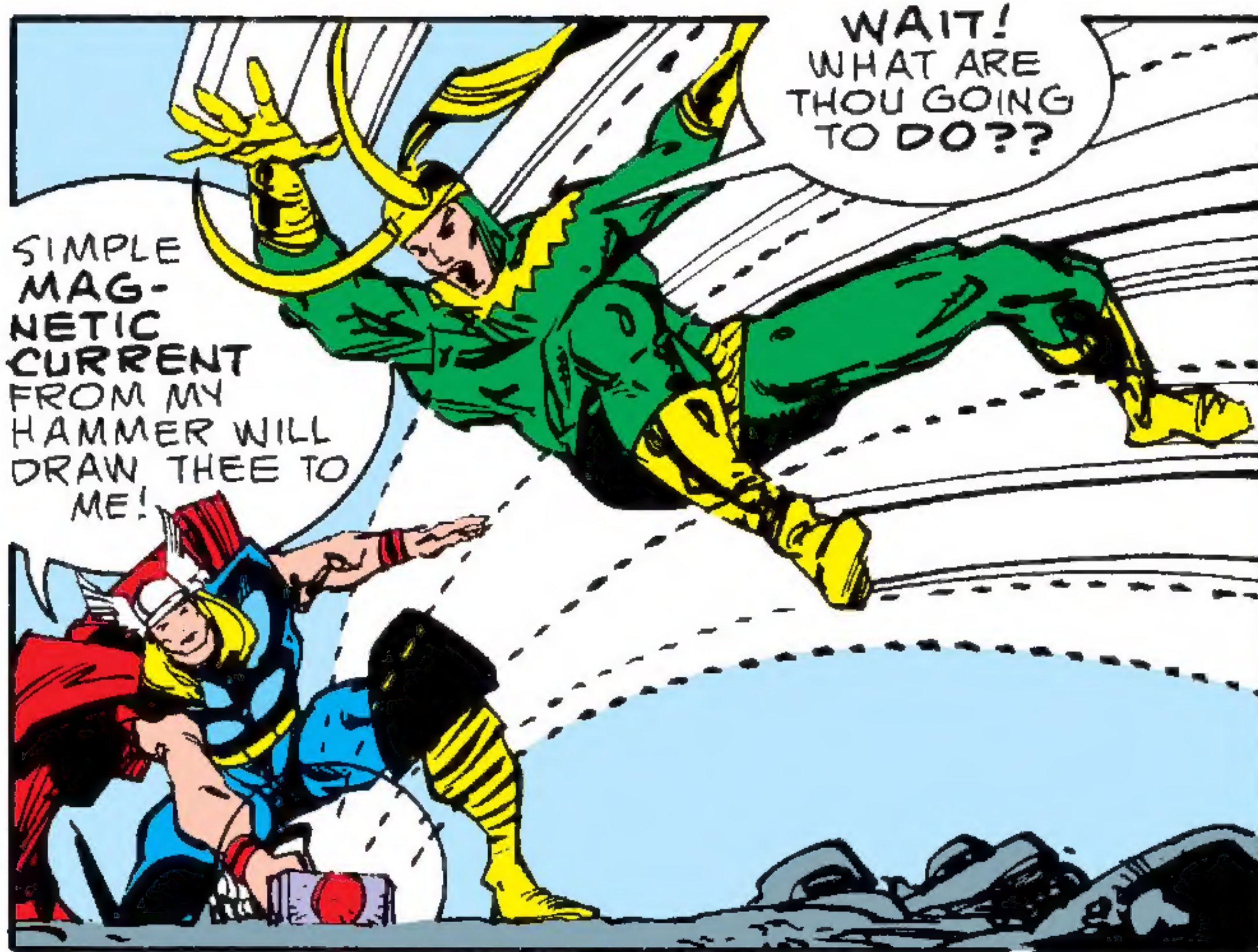
NAY!
STILL I
BE GOD OF
THUNDER--

AND
LIGHTNING!



THAMP!

USED TO DWELLING
BELOW--HE CANST NOT
BEAR SUCH
RADIANCE!



WAIT!
WHAT ARE
THOU GOING
TO DO??

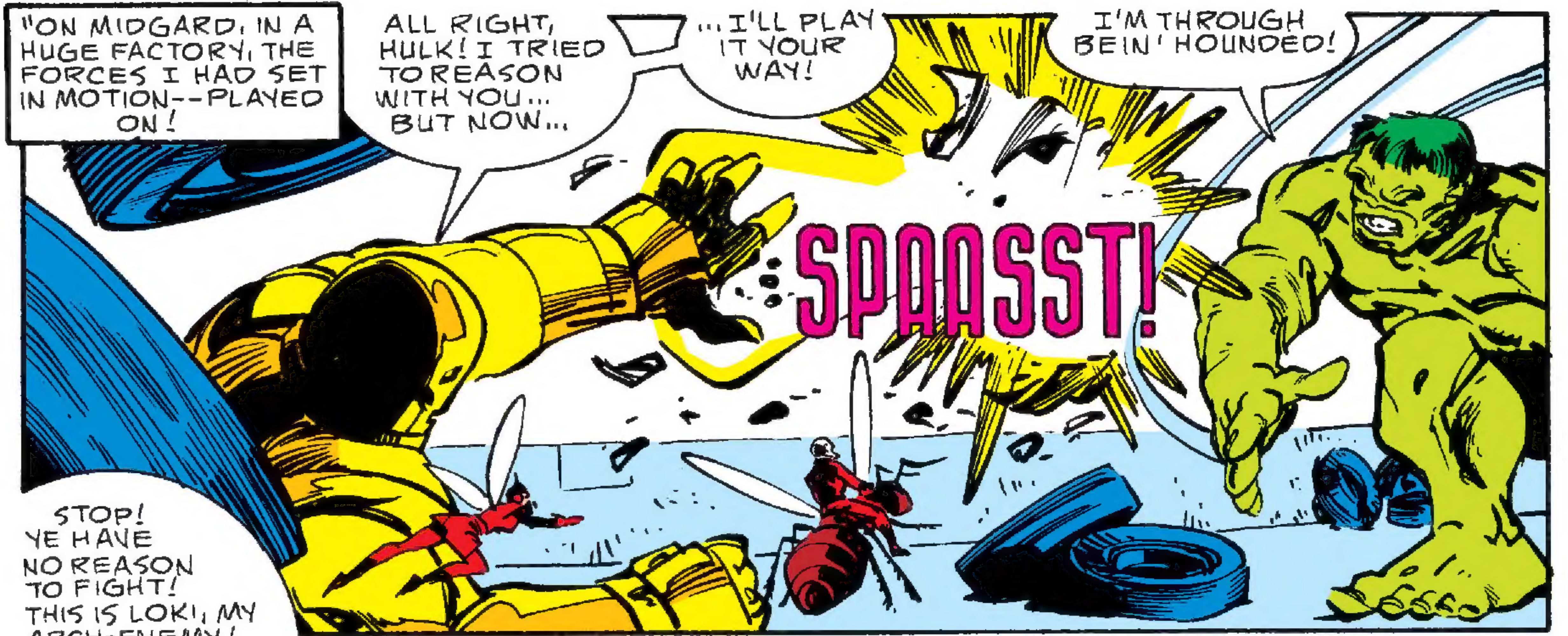
SIMPLE
MAG-
NETIC
CURRENT
FROM MY
HAMMER WILL
DRAW THEE TO
ME!

WITH NOBLE ODIN'S
PERMISSION, I SHALL
BRING THEE TO
MIDGARD!



THERE
YOU WILL
FIND OTHERS
WAITING FOR
YOU...

...OTHERS
ALMOST AS
POWERFUL
AS I!



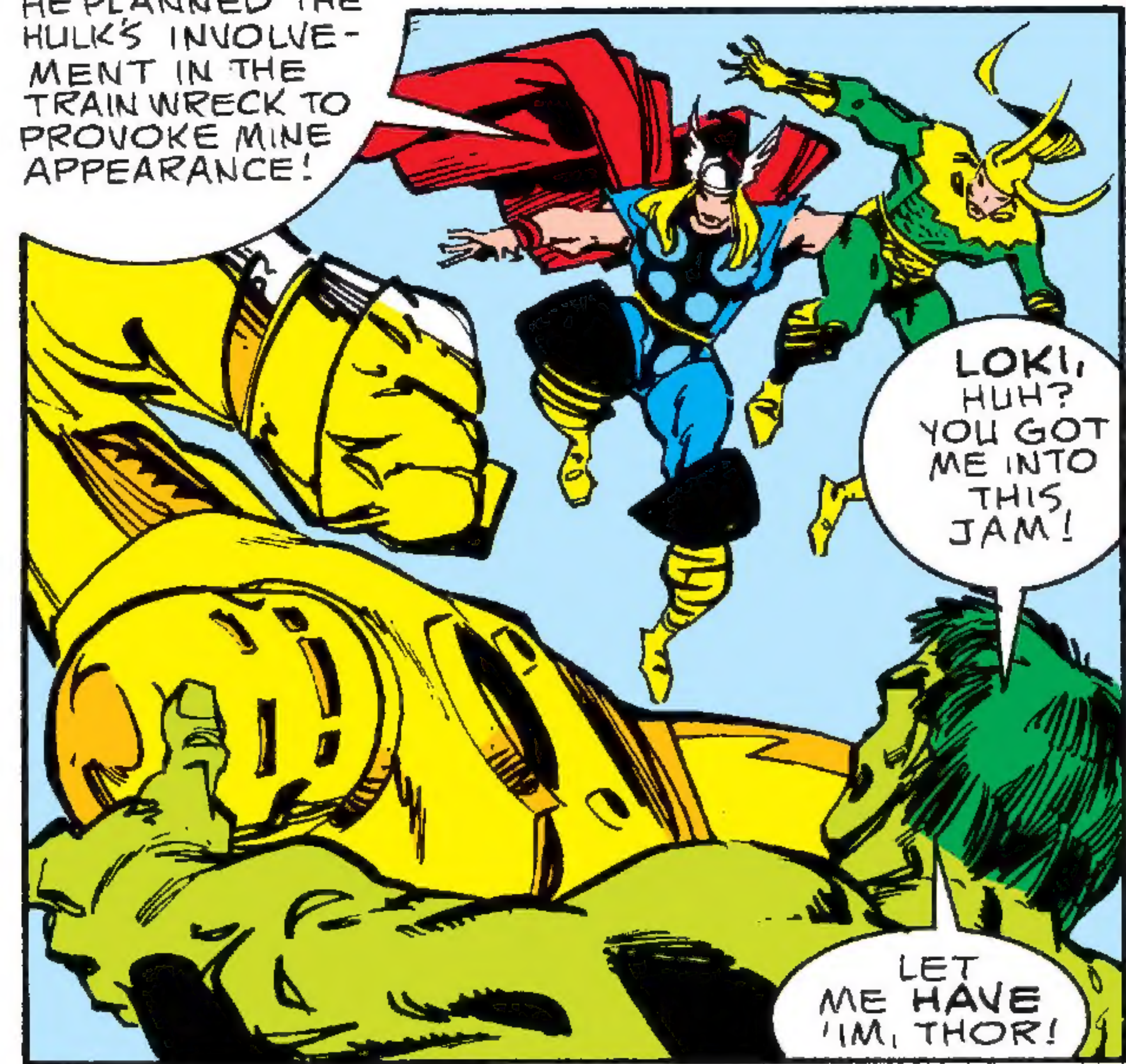
"ON MIDGARD, IN A HUGE FACTORY, THE FORCES I HAD SET IN MOTION--PLAYED ON!"

ALL RIGHT, HULK! I TRIED TO REASON WITH YOU... BUT NOW...

...I'LL PLAY IT YOUR WAY!

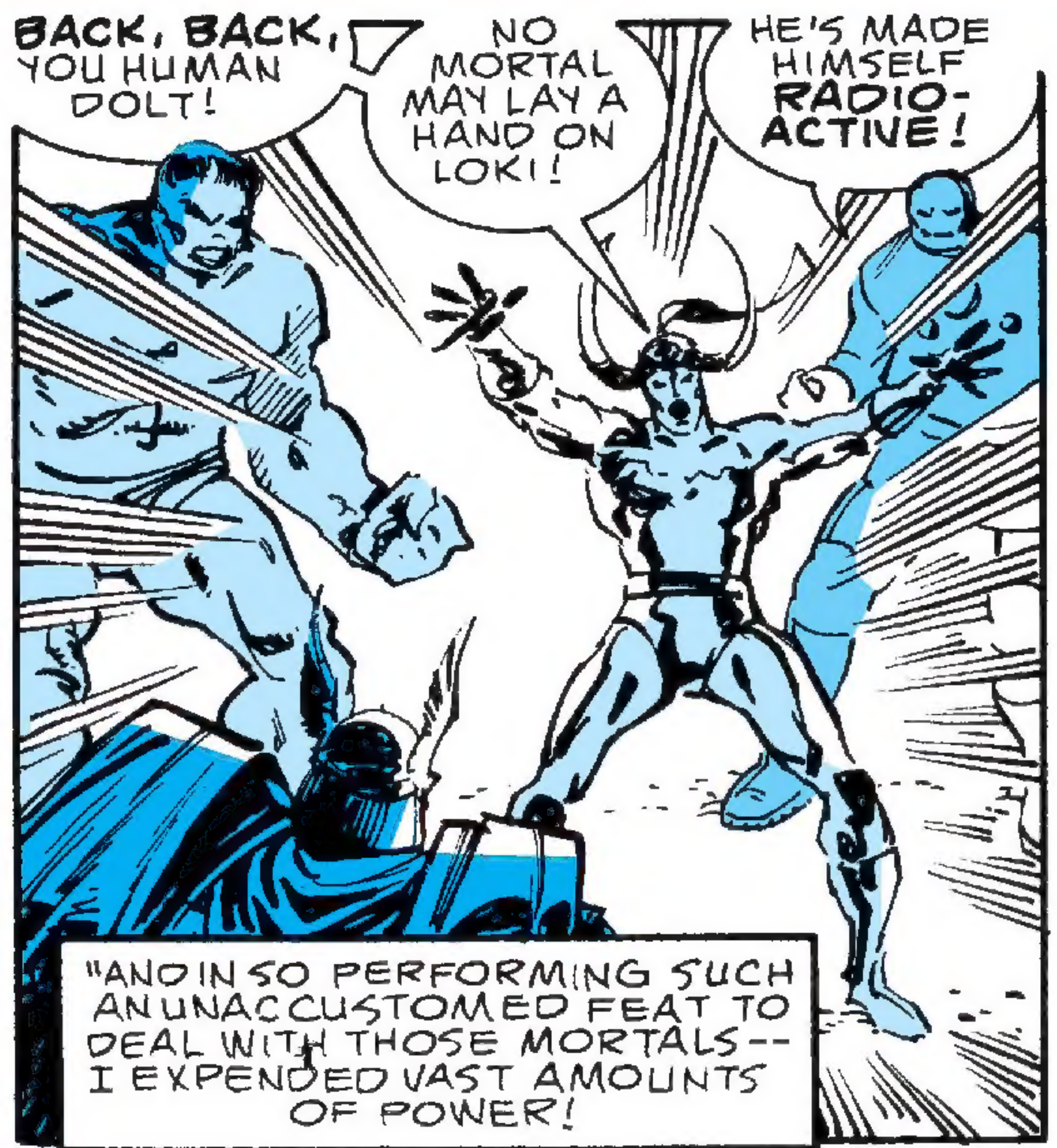
I'M THROUGH BEIN' HOUNDED!

STOP! YE HAVE NO REASON TO FIGHT! THIS IS LOKI, MY ARCH-ENEMY! HE PLANNED THE HULK'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE TRAIN WRECK TO PROVOKE MINE APPEARANCE!



LOKI, HUH? YOU GOT ME INTO THIS JAM!

LET ME HAVE 'IM, THOR!



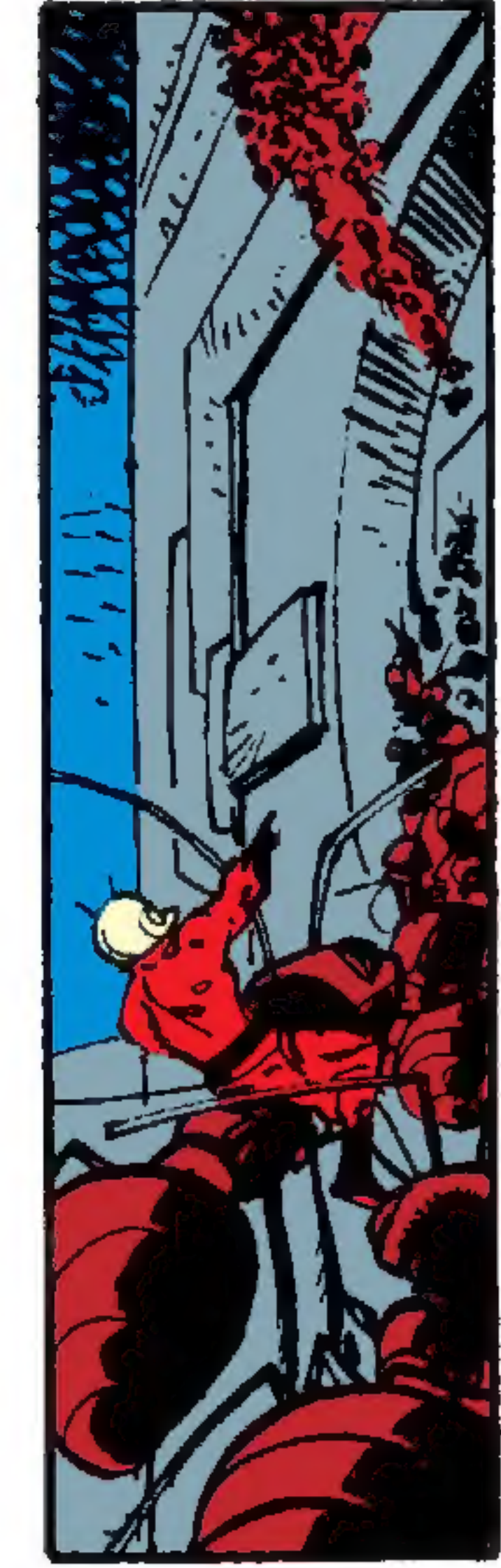
BACK, BACK, YOU HUMAN DOLT!

NO MORTAL MAY LAY A HAND ON LOKI!

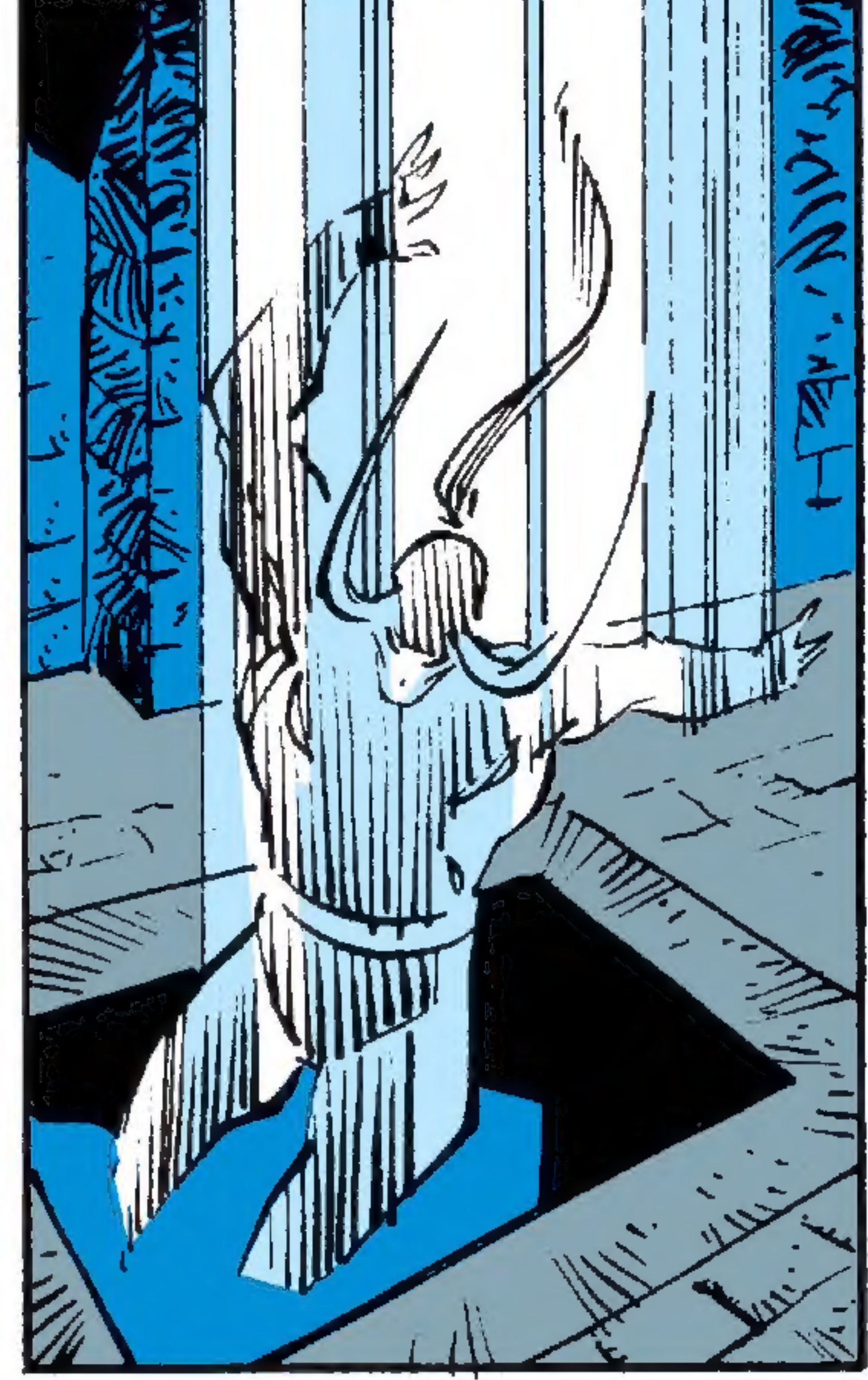
HE'S MADE HIMSELF RADIO-ACTIVE!

"AND IN SO PERFORMING SUCH AN UNACCUSTOMED FEAT TO DEAL WITH THOSE MORTALS-- I EXPENDED VAST AMOUNTS OF POWER!"

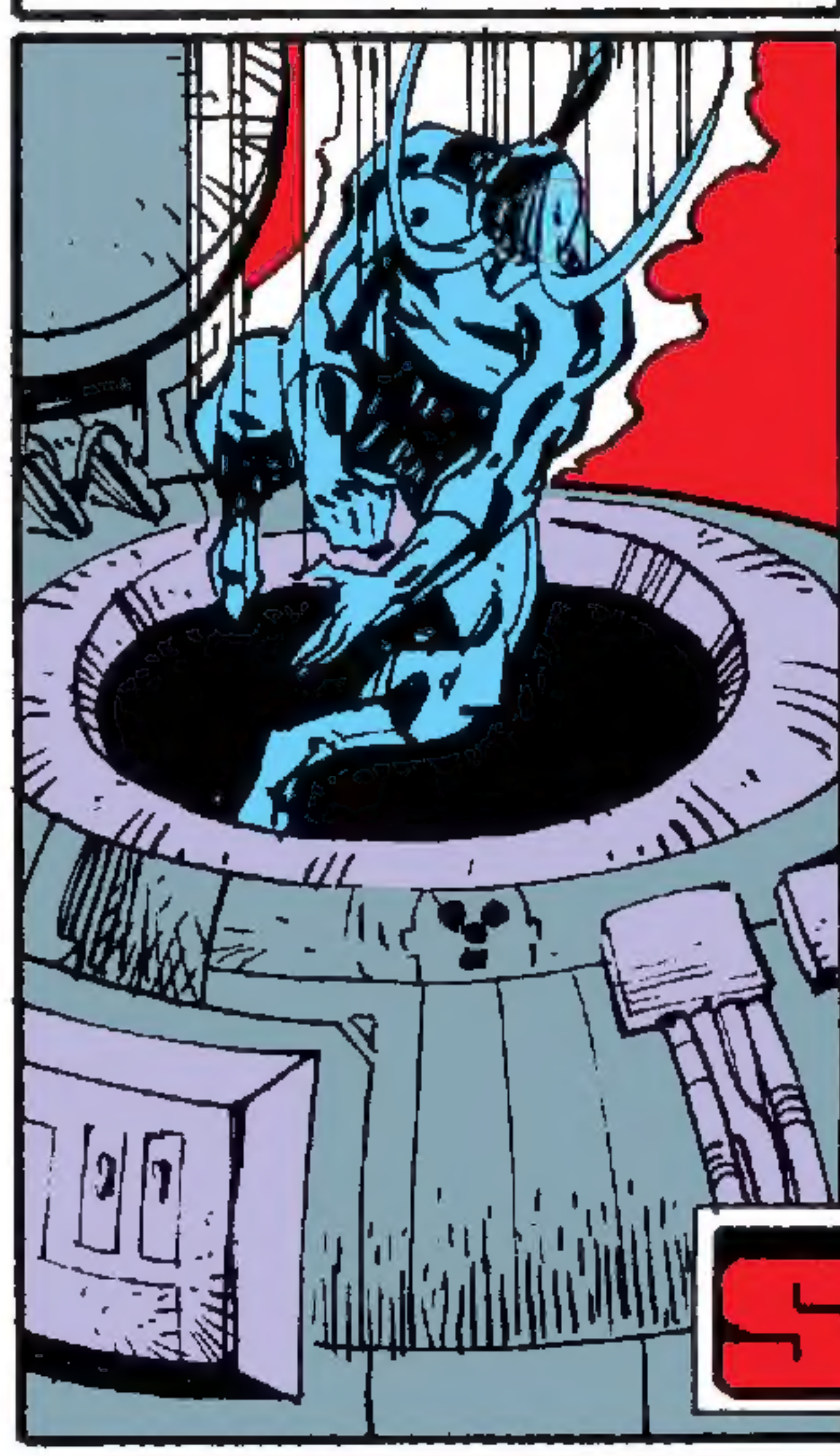
"I WAS UN-AWARE THAT NEARBY, THE ANT-MAN WAS MOVING A CERTAIN SWITCH--"



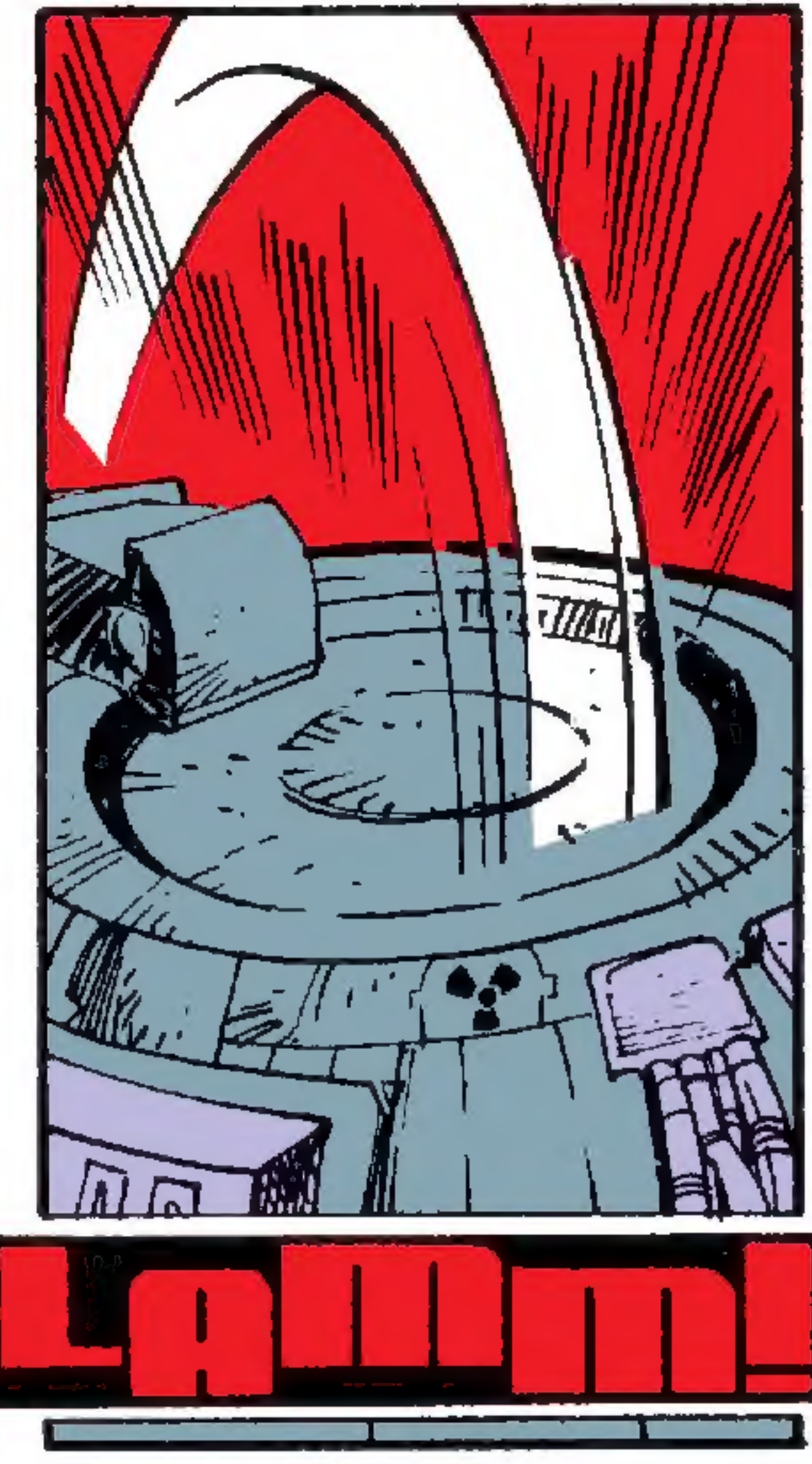
"--OPENING A TRAPDOOR BENEATH ME--"



"...CAUSING MY FALL INTO A LOWER CHAMBER WHERE LEAD-LINED TANKS AWAITED THEIR RADIOACTIVE CARGO FOR EVENTUAL DISPOSAL."



"THE LID SLAMMED SHUT--AND IN THE RADIOACTIVE STATE I HAD SO FOOLISHLY TAKEN ON TO DAZZLE MINE ENEMIES I WAS FAR TOO WEAK TO QUICKLY EMERGE!"



SLAMM!

"SHORTLY I WAS RETURNED TO ASGARD AND THE TENDER MERCIES OF ODIN. BUT NOT BEFORE THE DULLARDS DECIDED TO BAND TOGETHER AS A SINGLE FORCE FOR "GOOD" AND CALL THEMSELVES--"

THE AVENGERS!

I AM SICKENED TO THE DEPTHS OF MY BEING BY THE MERCILESS THOUGHT THAT I--LOKI-- WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS TRAVESTY.

AND LIKE A MALIGNANCY, THE ORIGINAL CELL HAS SPLIT IN TWAIN, FOR THERE ARE NOW TWO SUCH GROUPS OF AVENGERS.

AND 'T WAS MINE ORIGINAL SIN WHICH CAUSED THE CANCER. OH, THE IGNOMINITY OF IT.

I CAN BEAR NO MORE. THE PAST BE DONE.

STILL, THERE BE SCHEMES APLENTY TO HATCH. THUS, LET THE UNIVERSE BEWARE.

NEXT ANNUM, I SHALL RETURN.

FOR OF THE MEMORY OF THIS HORROR I CAN NEVER BE FREE.

END.

